DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 220 432 SP 020 709

AUTHOR	Winter, Gillian; And Others
TITLE	A Child is Not a Little Adult: Modified Approaches to Sport for Australian Children.
INSTITUTION	Tasmanian Education Dept., Hobart (Australia).; Tasmanian State Schools Sports Council (Australia).
PUB DATE	80
NOTE	157p.
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Athletic Coaches; *Athletics; *Children; Competition; *Developmental Stages; Elementary Education; Foreign Countries; Individual Development; Injuries; Motor Development; Parent Attitudes; *Physical Characteristics; Physical Education; Psychomotor Skills; Sex Bias; Skill Development; Social Development; *Standards
IDENTIFIERS	*Australia

ABSTRACT

This publication reports on competitive sports played by 6 to 12 year old children in Australia. The information in this two-part report is directed toward teachers, coaches, and parents. Part I, "Modified Approaches to Junior Sport," provides discussion of aspects of physical, social, and emotional development associated with children playing adult sports, the role of parents and coaches, the implications of sexism and competition, and the advantages of modifying sports for children. Part II of the report contains a directory, of individual sports, that can be used as a reference as to rules and developments in the individual sports: archery; little athletics; Australian football; badminton; baseball; basketball; bowls; boxing; canoeing; cricket; croquet; cycling; fencing; golf; gymnastics; court handball; team handball; hockey; judo; karate; karting; lacrosse; life saving; netball; orienteering; racquetball; roller skating; rowing; rugby; snow skiing; soccer; softball; squash; swimming; tennis; trampoline; vigoro; volleyball; water skiing; wrestling; and yachting. Reports on the individual athletic activities evaluate existing conditions and discuss possible changes within the particular sport. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED220432

A CHILD IS NOT A LITTLE ADULT

Modified approaches to sport for Australian children

Hobart
Division of Recreation, Education Department
and
Tasmanian State Schools Sports Council
1980

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Gillian Winter

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☑ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or op[illegible]ted in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

SP 020709

FOREWORD

Sport means different things to different people, but above all else it should be an enjoyable experience - sport should be fun. If children participating in sport are to develop basic skills and experience the fun of playing, they require thoughtful and purposeful adult assistance.

This publication is intended for people responsible for the sporting experience of our school age children - teachers, parents, coaches and others sincerely interested in the welfare of our youngsters.

The Tasmanian Government believes that education of coaches in particular, is vital in expanding the quantity and quality of sporting opportunities in the community. If this publication reaches and influences a large number of volunteer coaches, then the hard work of those responsible for its production will have been rewarded.

I am delighted that Tasmania has, with the financial assistance of the Commonwealth Government, been able to take this initiative to document the state of the art in modified rules for so many sports played in Australian schools and community.

I trust this document will prove to be a valuable addition to the material available to parents, educators and coaches throughout Australia.

The Hon. D. Baldock, M.H.A.
Minister for Recreation,
Hobart. 1980

CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword	ii
Acknowledgements	v
Preface	vi
Part I - Modified Approaches to Junior Sport	vii
Chapter 1 - Introduction	1
Chapter 2 - The Physical Development of the Child	12
Chapter 3 - The Social and Emotional Development of the Child	22
References	48
Part II - A Directory of Sports	58
Further documentation of Modified Approaches to Junior Sport in Australia	59
Sports not included in the Report	60
Archery	61
Little Athletics	62
Australian Football	66
Badminton	72
Baseball	73
Basketball	76
Bowls	80
Boxing	81
Canoeing	83
Cricket	85
Croquet	88
Cycling	89
Fencing	90
Golf	90
Gymnastics	91

Court Handball	93
Team Handball	94
Hockey	96
Judo	102
Karate	104
Karting	105
Lacrosse	106
Royal Life Saving	108
Surf Life Saving	109
Netball	110
Orienteering	115
Racquetball	117
Roller Skating	118
Rowing	119
Rugby League	119
Rugby Union	121
Snow Skiing	124
Soccer	124
Softball	129
Squash	132
Swimming	133
Tennis	135
Trampoline	138
Vigoro	139
Volleyball	139
Water Skiing	141
Wrestling	142
Yachting	143

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Division of Recreation and the Tasmanian State Schools Sports Council are indebted to the Commonwealth Government for the grant which enabled this study to be undertaken.

The report was researched and written by Mrs. Gillian Winter under the supervision of a Committee which consisted of Mr. Vince Smith, Research Officer (Convenor until February 1980), Mr. Tony Ibbott, Principal Recreation Officer (Convenor from February 1980 onwards), Mr. Malcolm Wells, Senior Recreation Officer (South), Mr. Robin Hood, Principal Recreation Officer (Sports Development), all staff of the Division of Recreation, and Mr. Maurie Oborne, Principal, Rosetta Primary School, representing the Tasmanian State Schools Sports Council.

The Committee are grateful to all those national sporting organisations that provided information on junior sport. A number of individuals and organisations locally and overseas assisted willingly in the search for information on modifications. Staff at the State Library of Tasmania and the Canadian Sports Information Resource Centre were particularly helpful.

The cartoons were drawn by Mr. Kevin Bailey, the cover design was prepared by Ms. Margery Lovelock and the typing was done by Mrs. Ann Druery. Mrs. Beryle Woolley, Secretary of the Tasmanian State Schools Sports Council, kept minutes of Committee meetings, typed correspondence and the draft report. The Committee appreciates the contribution made to the report by these people.

ADDENDUM

p.v - Acknowledgements - The artwork in Part II was done by Mr. Greg Cannon.

PREFACE

As an educator, parent and sportsman I believe children should be involved in sports of all kinds. Unfortunately because of highly structured competition, hypertensive adult organizers and over-enthusiastic parents, the positive benefits of sports participation do not always emerge.

By simple modifications many sports can equalize the opportunity for each child to participate; increase mastery of skills; protect children from anxiety and physical pain; and, overall, increase the enjoyment and desire to remain in the sport.

The draft report of *A Child is not a little adult* has already become a standard work in this College for students working in the area of children's sport. We think the background information gives a balanced view of the significant factors which form the basis of issues and problems in the area.

This final report is a magnificient attempt to place the whole issue of under-age sports and their modifications in a logical framework. It will become the basis for continuing debate and dialogue with academics and practitioners. It will certainly provide further impetus to a surge of community interest in an issue of quite major social significance, as the problems of allowing children to play as children and providing equal opportunity to gain success and have fun, are confronted, and in time, solved. I hope that the public acceptance of 'the problem' will see a concentrated effort through Government Departments e.g. Education Departments, Departments of Youth, Sport and Recreation to bring about changes in under-age competition.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to acknowledge this very significant and worthwhile work.

David Parkin,
Lecturer in Health, Physical
Education and Recreation
Burwood State College,
Victoria. 1980

Part I

MODIFIED APPROACHES TO JUNIOR SPORT

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Objectives

In May 1979 the Division of Recreation, Education Department, Tasmania, and the Tasmanian State Schools Sports Council received a grant under the Commonwealth Government's Sports Development Programme 1978-79 for the 'documentation of recent experience in Australia of the application of modified rules to junior sport - primary school children in particular'. (G.R. Dempster, pers. comm., 1979) The grant was sought on the grounds that the Division and the Council had been interested in the subject for some time and had already collected information on modified rules for some sports.

The Council thought that in the case of many sports this information was not readily available to the people who needed it most - teachers, coaches and parents. It was felt that a publication could be of great value which outlined:

(a) the need for modified rules;

(b) the developments within individual sports, including an evaluation of the present conditions under which children compete and proposals for change in the future.

The aim of the report is to cover all sports played competitively by 6-12 year old children in Australia. The particular modifications needed by handicapped children are not discussed and deserve a separate survey.

Structure of the Report

The report is divided into two parts. Part I is a *background paper* which provides a general discussion of the problems associated with children playing adult sports and the advantages of modifications. Part II is a directory of individual sports which can be used as a *reference document* by the reader to check on developments within those sports which interest him.

The Problem

For some years concern has been expressed about aspects of junior sport including:

(a) the excessive physical demands made on children using adult equipment and grounds;

(b) the unsuitability for children of complex adult rules;

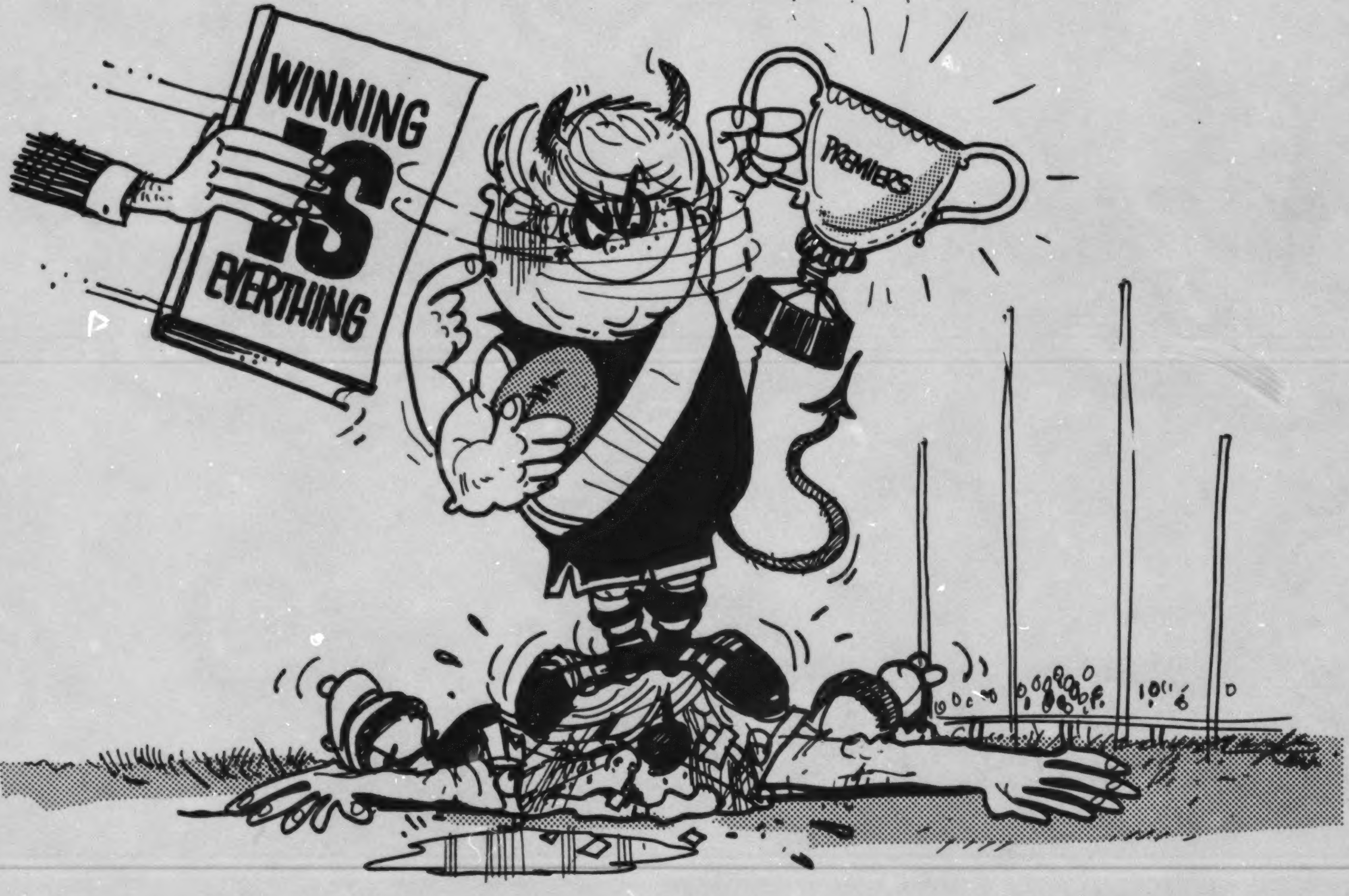
(c) the emphasis on competition rather than skill development;

(d) the failure of many children to develop skills adequately because of the emotional pressure induced by competitive games;

(e) the elimination of children by adults from sports because they are not good enough for competitive teams;

(f) the concentration by teachers and coaches on the most talented children who often monopolise grounds and equipment to the exclusion of those who really need more practice and teaching;

(g) the lack of enjoyment experienced by many who play in teams because the game is dominated by the physically stronger children and real participation is not experienced;


WINNING IS EVERTHING
PREMIERS

(h) the large number of children who drop out of sport before adolescence, either because they are made to feel failures or, if successful, because they tire of the pressure to train and perform;

(i) the failure of sporting administrators to take into account different rates of maturation in children so that grades are determined solely by chronological age and not height, weight and current skill level;

(j) the pressure exerted on children to succeed by some parents, coaches and teachers;

(k) the hostility of some adults to the idea of changing sports rules to suit children, on the grounds that it will no longer be a 'proper' game;

(l) the piecemeal modification of sports without adequate thought and planning based on research and experience.

Rainer Martens (1978, p.9), the well-known American writer on children's sports, has noted that more children are entering competitive sports and at an earlier age. This trend is also evident in Australia. Yet Geoffrey Watson (1979, p.10) suggests that under present conditions, children's sport constitutes

> one of the most severe forms of child abuse known, yet publicly sanctioned by the community. In spite of limited skill, comprehension and social development, young children have been almost literally treated as miniature adult sportsmen and women ...

Despite this trenchant criticism which is supported by many concerned adults, it is recognised by many people that, under altered conditions, sport can be a valuable childhood experience. David Parkin (1978, p.53) suggests that sport offers the opportunity for:

(a) the development of specific motor skills;

(b) the practice of wholesome competition;

(c) the opportunity for social interaction.

Ideally, the child should experience a sense of physical well-being, mental alertness and pleasure through involvement in a variety of sports, including not only those which can be played when young, but also those which can be a life-long recreation.

In the International Year of the Child many facets of childhood have been examined. Sport deserves to be one of these. In the years following the I.Y.C. we should be aiming to improve the quality of the child's sporting experience in Australia. Traditionally, Australia has been a country of sports enthusiasts. Perhaps there will be more participants, fewer spectators and less need to 'sell' exercise as a form of preventive medicine if children have enjoyable rather than humiliating sports experiences. This will only happen if changes are made and children are not grouped into 'the teams' and 'others' with the talented receiving the attention and improving while the rest fall further behind and cease to try.

The Value of Modified Rules

A modified sport should be a simplified version of the adult game which still retains its basic intent. The changes made should reflect the different stages of physical and psychological development of children. As the child matures and his skills improve, it is expected that a smooth transition to the adult game can be made if the modifications have been carefully developed.

In general, areas to be modified include:

(a) the size of the playing area and length of playing time to reduce physical demands on children;

(b) the team size, (including provision for the rotation and interchange of players), so as to increase participation by each child;

(c) the equipment, such as sticks, racquets and balls, goal height and width, to make it safer and/or more manageable;

(d) the relaxation or elimination of technical rules to allow freedom of play, particularly while basic skills are being learned, and the framing of rules which are comprehensible to a young child;

(e) the grading of children by height and weight in preference to chronological age to ensure greater equality among players.

Geoffrey Watson (1979, p.12) suggests that the benefits of such modifications are:

(a) increased enjoyment;

(b) increased desire to remain involved in sport;

(c) the learning of skills in competitive situations which are free from stress;

(d) the protection of the child from exposure to unnecessary anxiety and physical pain.

The Scope of the Report

In documenting modified rules in Australia, we have looked not only at changes in court, team and equipment size and the conduct of a game to make it more suitable to the child's stage of development, but also matters such as reduction of competitiveness and adult pressure and the increase of skills, enjoyment and participation. Rather than considering simply modified rules, we are looking at modified *approaches* to junior sport. The existence of 'mini' and 'little league' games does not guarantee a desirable sports environment. They need to be examined for the problems they present, although it is obvious they have gone some way towards physically modifying their sport.

Much that has been written on the problems of sport for children has been written by academics, psychologists and doctors. Their work appears in journals read by their colleagues or else appears as short sensational accounts in the media. Useful seminars have recently been sponsored by the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, but there still seemed a need for a report which expresses some of the arguments in favour of modified approaches to junior sport in a format that will reach teachers, coaches, parents and sporting administrators. The subject of children and sport stirs many emotions, but deserves to be looked at in a rational way, even if only a small amount of actual research has been done on the success or otherwise of modified rules.

For information about individual sports national controlling bodies were asked what, if any, modifications for under 12 year olds were officially recognised by their organisation and whether they were aware of any other informal modifications to their sport. The national organisations of fifty-two sports which might be played by juniors were contacted. Replies were received from organisations connected with forty-two of these sports.

The degree of need for modifications is not the same for every sport nor is it universally accepted. No attempt has been made in this report to comparatively evaluate the success of existing modified rules because of these differences, nor for this reason has it been possible to formulate a comprehensive plan of action for children's sport.

This report attempts to document the stage Australian sporting administrators have reached regarding junior sport in late 1980. A draft report was issued mid-1980 to check information gathered during 1979. Corrections and additions have been made in the light of comments received on the draft report. Where modifications exist, we wish to make them better known and advise where more information is available. It has been assumed that readers have access to copies of adult rules of the games discussed. Similarly, if modifications have been published, the source is indicated rather than extensively reprinted. Where information on modifications has not yet been published or is not readily available, the sport is discussed in more detail.

Where possible, additional modifications have been suggested and present modifications discussed. Preparatory games for the sport and additional reading have also been included. As indicated in the Acknowledgements, information has been sought from overseas and has been included where it complemented or expanded and not merely duplicated Australian developments.

It is beyond the scope of this report to include comprehensive details of modifications for each sport but it is pleasing to note that some attempt is already being made to produce manuals covering modified rules for several sports. The Victorian Department of Youth Sport and Recreation (K. Norris, pers. comm., 1980) is currently preparing a document outlining modified rules used in that State for ten popular sports. Such manuals are an important way of publicising modified rules and assisting teachers and coaches to organise modified sports and other State bodies responsible for sport should consider following the Victorian lead.

Future Developments

Parkin (1980a, p.13) and Evans (1980, p.13) have noted that a rationale for game-modification can easily be developed, and that it has been by many writers. What is not really known is which modifications are most appropriate for each game and each age level. At present changes are based on intuitive understanding rather than objective knowledge. Assumptions such as that smaller equipment is necessary for smaller players, though logical, have been insufficiently tested and evaluated. Henry Pang (pers. comm., 1980) has suggested, too, that modified games need to be evaluated to see whether changes are effective and whether other problems emerge. There is a move towards planned change but it must always be remembered that 'poorly designed change may be quite counter-productive'. (Evans 1979, p.7)

When researchers have found out which modifications are most appropriate there will be a need to examine the 'process of innovation of the modification' (Evans, pers. comm., 1980) to find out how modifications can be successfully introduced to overcome the reluctance to change which is evident among many individuals and organisations.

If modified approaches to junior sport are not adopted, it is apparent that many children will continue to find organised sport quite unrewarding. Those who participate, enjoying the increased leisure time and sporting facilities of our affluent society, will often lack important sporting skills because of their early sports experience.

Geoff Caldwell (1975, p.333) suggests that ecosports, such as orienteering, hiking, bicycling, swimming, all of which will be non-competitive, are likely to be the preferred sports of the future. In America and Canada, 'free form', 'never-never' games, or informal games programmes are already presenting an important alternative to organised, competitive sports.

Surely, these signs should be an incentive to sporting bodies to examine the structure of junior participation before losing further support. Ideally, it is assumed, sporting associations expect that a body of skilled players will move on to coaching and administrative positions within their sport. They do not want them to drop out because of boredom, frustration and undue competitive pressure. In purely practical financial terms, too, it would seem advisable for national associations to be aware of current criticism of junior sport for it may well happen that in future, Government grants for junior sport may only go to sports which have been modified.

It has been suggested by Aubrey Kotz (quoted in *Modifications in junior sport* 1978, p.17) that 'if the intent of a new rule is to assist skill development and fun involvement, and it does not destroy the nature of the game, then it may be adopted'. This is an intelligent approach to the problem if there are no other guidelines. But a uniform approach or national policy should be enunciated for each competitive sport after a reasonable period of research and experimentation even if additional modifications are used in training routines or to suit the needs of a particular group. Failure to have nationally recognised modifications means that informal changes cause problems when different groups meet competitively. This occurred in England recently. In this instance a decision was made by one group of teachers to ban hand-offs in rugby because they felt too inexperienced to, teach or referee the technique and felt that too many children used it as the sole means of beating an opponent and as a weapon of offence, not defence. It was also realised that, when used incorrectly, it was the opponent who suffered and children needed protection from possible injury. These teachers felt the ban on hand-offs did not infringe the spirit of the game and found, in fact, that it led to higher playing standards and better ball distribution. Yet in a subsequent tournament series, they were criticised by a school which did not support the ban as merely protecting themselves from their own inefficiency. E.H. Burden (1978, p.4) Secretary of the National Council for School Sport, in judging the matter averred:

> The basis for any decisions to amend nationally agreed rules and regulations should be quite simple. If the alterations are designed to recognise the physical limitations of young players, they should be carried out under the advice and guidance of the national association of that particular school sport. If ... it is done to protect the whims and fancies of local groups of teachers, I hope such people will think again.

Geoff Watson (1979, p.13) has suggested that the five steps to achieve satisfactory modifications are:

(a) *analysis* of the existing game;

(b) *identification* of problems it presents for children;

(c) *innovation* through alteration of these conditions;

(d) *publicity* of the changes through their use;

(e) *policy formation* on the modifications.

It is hoped that national bodies will take these steps and not abdicate their responsibility to provide teachers, coaches and local administrators with guidelines for junior sport which will protect and nurture young players.

Finally, in America a Bill of Rights for Young Athletes has been produced by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (Thomas 1978, p.135; Smoll & Lefebre 1979, p.175) and it would seem that Australia, too, needs such a philosophical framework in which to develop guidelines for junior sport.

Chapter 2

THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

> It is obvious that the way in which almost any game is organised and administered is very much a 'local arrangement' whereby a number of factors interact to influence the game-design, least of which may be the suitability of the rules, equipment and conditions of play to the participants - the children. (Evans 1979, p.5)
>
> The game design dictates the kind of success children will have so it is mandatory that we design games to meet their total developmental needs. (Morris 1978, p.13)

It is claimed that children's sport promotes physical growth and development, aids the acquisition of motor skills, assists the process of socialisation, and develops emotional understanding between and within children. It provides a groundwork for life-long leisure pursuits, uses up excess energy, occupies time more profitably than other anti-social pursuits and imposes a discipline which can lead to self discipline. It fosters co-operation and the ability to handle success and failure. Yet 'not one of these game purposes will be served in a game unless the game is structured to promote the specific behaviour'. (Morris 1976, p.2)

In this chapter, consideration is given to the physical characteristics of children, skill development, maturation and injuries in relation to sport. It includes an examination of modified approaches to improve children's sporting experience so that the desirable outcomes outlined above may be achieved.

The Physical Characteristics of the Young Child

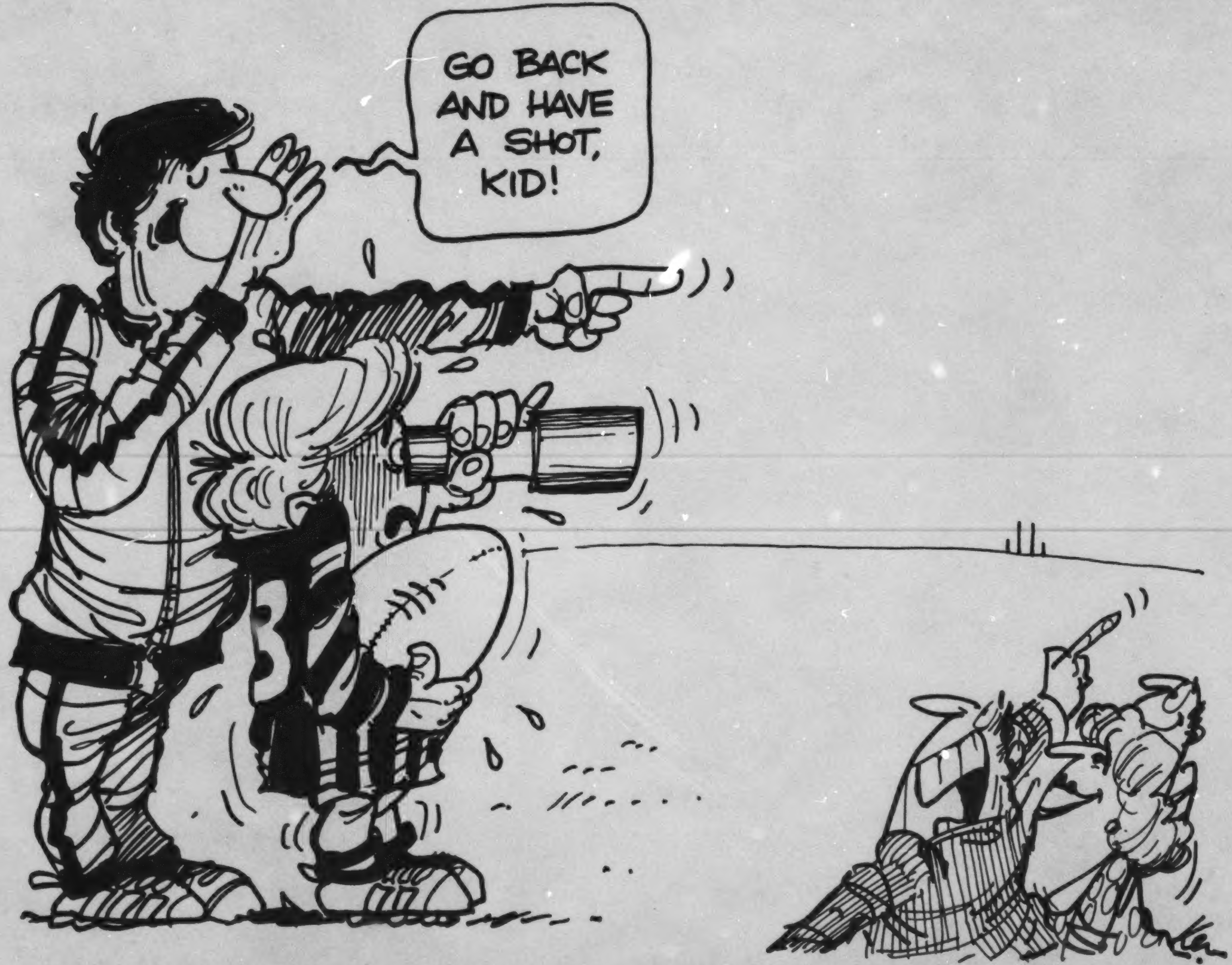
It is an obvious but often overlooked fact that children's physical strength, though developing rapidly, is by no means that of an adult. In the area of muscular strength and ability their capacity for balance, weight bearing and transference, motion and co-ordination, is not fully developed and may be less effective under the stress of playing competitively. Children's bones, too, have not completely ossified i.e. matured and are more prone to injury and permanent damage. Nor have the heart and lungs of young children the capacity for endurance of adults.

It is estimated that an adult footballer can cover a ground in three kicks but it may take a child ten and become a test of endurance rather than skill. It has been suggested (Usher 1972) that if a 10 year old child (average height 4 ft. 6 in. or 1.37 m.) is expected to use a regulation soccer goal (8 yds. x 8 ft. or 7.3 x 2.4 m.) then proportionally an adult (average height 5 ft. 10 in. or 1.7 m.) should be defending and playing in a goal (10 1/3 yds. x 10 ½ ft. or 9.4 x 3.2 m.)! Is it reasonable to expect that a child should have to shoot into 10 ft. (3 m.) high netball goals when she is much shorter than her adult counterpart? The size of grounds and equipment must be reduced to allow for children's lesser strength, stamina, speed and size and thus allow them a reasonable chance of success. With smaller grounds, too, the players are encouraged to concentrate because the ball is never far away.

Studies (Gibson & Watson 1978, p.6; Dunn 1978, p.51; Parkin 1980a, p.13; Smith 1976; Evans & Davis 1980) in various sports have shown that with a regulation size team (e.g. in hockey, football, soccer and cricket) many children seldom touch the ball in a match. This is because the physically stronger ones monopolise the game and because of the confusion that arises when so many children try to be where the ball is. Yet for children to exercise their skills and gain satisfaction from the game they should touch the ball as often as possible and be in possession of it for as long as possible. As studies (Dunn 1976, p.52; Parkin 1980a, p.14) have shown with smaller sized teams the opportunity for such participation is possible and play does not become so congested. The rotation and interchange of players will also add further variety and interest to the game for the players.

Don Morris (1978, p.13) points out that up to the age of 6 years children can only track a ball as it moves horizontally. Between 6 - 7½ years they generally learn to track a ball moving vertically as well. But if a ball moves in an arc the child cannot track it and move to intercept it accurately. This capacity is not developed until the age of 8 - 8½ years and, as with other skills, may not be developed by some children until even later. Young children have great difficulty in judging the velocity of balls and often watch the thrower's movement rather than the ball flight.

Lighter balls (e.g. heavy duty balloons, beach balls, vinyl balls) will often improve the children's skills because the lighter weight matches their finger-to-arm strength and removes the fear of being hit. The


GO BACK AND HAVE A SHOT, KID!

fact that lighter balls travel more slowly will make them easier for the child to track and intercept. Don Morris (1978, p.13) has also found after extensive experimentation that yellow and blue balls are tracked most easily by children while white (still the preferred colour by many manufacturers) is the most difficult.

Maturation

> One child said ... 'Last year the teacher said I couldn't play because I wasn't big enough and to try again next year. I'm bigger this year but so are all the others, and I'm still not allowed to play'. (Henderson 1977, p.30)

Just as it is vitally important to recognise the physical differences between child and adult is is essential to appreciate differences between children. In fact Henry Pang (1974a, p.13) suggests that:

> All competitive sport involving pre-adolescent children, male or female, is biologically unsound ... Growing up is a dynamic and highly individualised process - no two children ever follow an identical path to maturity. Turbulent changes are taking place continually until maturity is reached; any attempt to achieve 'even matching' is doomed to fail.

Rainer Martens (1978, p.174) has observed that boys of the same chronological age may vary by as much as 15 inches (38 cm.) in height, 90 pounds (40.8 kg.) in weight and 60 months in their anatomical or skeletal age. Owing to the failure to distinguish between chronological and developmental age, Henry Pang (1974a, p.13) believes, many unfortunate characteristics appear in children's sport: the sense of failure felt by so many slow developers; their lack of basic physical skills and endurance because concentrated effort has been placed on those with 'promise'; and their subsequent 'dropping out' from sport.

If children, graded by age, are so unequally matched that some are always winners, others always losers, then the *uncertainty* of the contest, an essential element for a rewarding, challenging experience, is eliminated. It is not much fun to play if you can forecast whether you will win or lose.

Martens (1978, p.185) suggests that in sports where speed, strength and power are likely to determine the outcome, matching children by skeletal age would make competition safer and more equitable. However, he recognises that the cost and possible undesirable side-effects of x-rays are high. Nor do such physical checks group children satisfactorily according to their mental and emotional development. However, several things can be done to make competition more satisfactory:

(a) weight should be used in addition to chronological age in all collision sports (e.g. football);

(b) skill tests designed for individual sports should be used to match children;

(c) limited age groups should always be used;

(d) sports officials should be empowered to move players into different groups if they are obviously biologically advanced or immature;

(e) a wide range of sports should be provided and various levels of skills and competition should exist within sports so that parents and coaches can tactfully direct a child to a suitable sport and within that sport he can choose the level of activity which he enjoys most.

While late developers should be helped to understand why they cannot compete with some of their peers, those who mature early should also be made aware that an evening-out process later will often lead to them losing their advantage.

Skill Development

> Make the game so it is not too hard or too easy. It should have to have skill.(M.A. Robertson 1978, p.11)
>
> We should not forget that the real place of skill learning is in well-structured practical sessions and not specifically in competitive games (modified or not). Many teachers and coaches have forgotten this. (D. Parkin, pers. comm., 1980)
>
> If one understands the difference between technique and skill, i.e. the former being the mechanics of how one performs a technique such as controlling the ball, the latter being the ability to perform the technique, correctly, in a match situation, then the use of small-sided games becomes even more important ... It could be that some of the players touch the ball only 6 - 8 times in the 11-a-side game. How can they develop skill? (Tindall 1980, p.18)

In *Fundamental Motor Patterns* Ralph Wickstrom (1977, p.12) suggests that there are three stages in motor skill development - minimal form, mature form and sport skill form. He believes that frequently children are pushed into sports skills before they have come near to accomplishing the mature form of the underlying basic skill.

> When this happens, any immature movement in the pattern of the basic skill is carried forward and, at least temporarily, becomes part of the pattern used in performing the sports skill.

This lack of readiness is heightened under competitive conditions. The child has, in basketball for example, to concentrate to accomplish skills of throwing, catching, jumping, dodging, footwork, while an adult has mastery of these and concentrates solely on planning game manoeuvres. The stress of the game can overload the capacity of the child too much so that he *regresses* to a lower level of his present capability or *substitutes* another skill. (M.A. Robertson 1978, p.11)

Since skills are not instinctive but learned, whether they are learned correctly depends on the kind of feedback the performer gets after executing a skill. Or as Wickstrom (1977, p.13) expresses it:

> If immature movements become modified positively by encouragement and the challenge of the more difficult task, the eventual result is beneficial to motor skill development.

It has been suggested earlier that a reduced playing area (and playing time) and suitably modified equipment will take the emphasis away from endurance and allow for greater skill development. Smaller teams allow for more frequent and longer contact with the ball and enable the coach to see more clearly problems in basic skill development among the players. The absence of stringent competition conditions should enable him to intervene and explain errors.

The performance of a simplified game satisfies the child's desire to exercise his skills realistically, but does not demand too much of him. He will feel sufficiently free of pressure to experiment with new skills and tactics (instead of relying on those which have worked before) and thus learn the finer points of the game. It is no use allowing children to play the adult game and then expecting them to go back to a modified version. They should be introduced to a modified game which is developed sequentially to culminate in the adult game.

It should also be pointed out that children's own games are often better for teaching basic skills than organised sports. It has been noted (Henderson 1977, p.27) that such games usually contain a lot of repetition such as bouncing, hopping, etc. with increasing levels of difficulty. A football match which degenerates into end-to-end kicking with a large number of balls will give much more skill practice than a match. Children also readily adjust to games without umpires and rule books. They practise their skills without acknowledging winners, or only temporary ones, and certainly not bothering about long term scores and prizes! A game may not even be finished, but if it is, it restarts immediately so that everyone has a new chance. Children like games with an element of luck so that individuals cannot be directly compared.(Opie 1969)

It has been noted (Bloomfield 1978, p.54) in one Australian State and is probably true of others that primary schools are not as well endowed as secondary schools with personnel, facilities, or programmes and that many children lack basic physical skills at adolescence. It is an area which should be thoroughly examined and rectified by offering a variety of suitably modified games at school as well as through community groups.

Bill Henderson (1977, p.31) a Victorian primary school headmaster, has been successful in promoting non-contact sports which require high levels of skill in bat and ball handling e.g. golf, tennis and squash. He sees them as having long-term benefits because they can be played in small, mixed groups at a variety of levels throughout adult life unlike, for example, netball or football.

Australian teachers should follow the example of the Scottish Physical Education Association (G. Donald, pers. comm., 1979) which

> encourages the profession to leave the adult form of the game to an older age group (11/12 plus) - to concentrate teaching on the basic skills, improve and refine them from 5 - 11 years, together with small side games with rules made by the class or teacher purely to emphasise the skill learned in any session(s). Even recognised 'mini' games are often met with disapproval.

The New Zealand Department of Education (M. Campbell, pers. comm., 1979) teachers are advised

> to modify games to meet the needs of the pupils and this may mean changes in playing areas, number of players, and scoring method. We also suggest games making to our teachers as it provides opportunity for the student to structure his own games and in so doing provides opportunity for the teacher to assess the students' skills and attitudes. It also provides opportunity to focus on values ...

Community sporting bodies as well as schools could consider the value of these games and incorporate elements of them in their programme even if their organisation's purpose is essentially competitive sport.

Injuries

Public concern regarding sporting injuries has been high for several years but an examination of available literature by Dowdell (1980, p.3) and Martens (1978, p.222) suggests that the risks are not excessive provided that certain measures are observed. These were embodied in a joint statement by the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation.(A.A.H.P.E.R. 197-, p.iv)

Their recommendations include the following suggestions:

(a) physical checkups for children;

(b) well maintained facilities and correctly fitted protective equipment;

(c) physical conditioning before beginning competition and a warmup session before each match;

(d) maturation matching;

(e) modification of equipment, grounds and rules;

(f) competent coaches who teach the children to compete safely, who are aware of signs of mental and physical stress and fatigue.

Parents, too, must watch for signs of fatigue and be vigilant that the child is participating in a sport suitable for him. The responsibility of parents, coaches and sporting administrators is clearly outlined by Sinclair (1980, p.8) who considers that there are three factors which increase the physical demands on children in sport:

(a) competing with injuries, or before injuries are fully rehabilitated;

(b) over-training (probably the most common cause of injury);

(c) the 'win at all cost' attitude, which commonly means that the athlete loses in the end.

Recognising that accidents can happen in any play activity, it should be one of the advantages of organised sport that adults can make it a relatively safe environment for children, maintaining their physical well-being and growth through suitable physical activities.

Chapter 3

THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

> Children used to be considered as miniature but slightly defective adults, and all their little childhood characteristics were seen as foibles which they would grow out of. Now we have come to realize that a child's way of reasoning - like his way of doing things physically is appropriate to his level of development, and there is no point in trying to get him to do things before he's ready. It's like expecting a child who is just learning to play tennis to act like a Wimbledon champion. (Collis 1980, p.4)

> Before a child comes to school his sporting and recreational world has been one where:
>
> (a) he mixes and plays naturally with both sexes;
> (b) he is involved in decision making and discussion about the rules of a game;
> (c) he is introduced to a variety of recreational and sporting worlds; fishing, walking in the park, camping, picnicking;
> (d) he is involved with adults who coax, advise, help and praise his first stumbling efforts;
> (e) he is the centre of his universe;
> (f) he makes up games by himself;
> (g) he doesn't 'compete' in the adult sense of the word. He may compete against himself or against the elements (trying to climb a tree);
> (h) he has used his physical growth to develop motor co-ordination, spatial relationships, balance etc.
>
> ... Have we as teachers or sporting administrators intervened and interfered in the social or recreational growth of children and thus, inadvertently, created unnatural alternatives, environments and values? (Goulburn Street School 1979, p.2)

Mentally and emotionally as well as physically the child is not a minature adult but has certain areas where he differs markedly in his capacity to cope with games designed for adults.

These may be summarised as:

(a) smaller capacity to cope with stress so that during the pressure of a competitive game he forgets rules and skills which can lead to anger, frustration and a sense of humiliation;

(b) less ability to think ahead, anticipate developments in the game with the result he cannot apply known skills and basic techniques effectively;

(c) the level and span of concentration is lower so that he cannot remember to apply techniques he has been taught;

(d) a more limited ability to make decisions so that he may not even act effectively to save himself from injury;

(e) he is self centred (e.g. he wants to be where the ball is) and finds it difficult to accept the restraints imposed by teamwork;

(f) less ability to grasp abstract concepts which are inherent in many rules.

It is now a widely held belief that sports competition must be reduced so that the child can perform known skills without pressure. To enable the child to enjoy the maximum degree of participation and skill practice, rules should be simple and within the grasp of the child's intellect and memory. This will mean that the game is not constantly being halted for the infringement of a rule which is quite meaningless to the child.

When a rule has been broken and the game stopped, an explicit explanation should be given so that all players learn something from the incident. When correcting faulty skills it should be done in a practical, friendly manner as children are very sensitive to criticism from 'significant adults' such as parents, coaches and teachers. Criticism of behaviour during the game should be appropriate to the child's age. For example, it is quite useless to berate a seven year old for 'lack of team spirit' when he is too emotionally immature to understand the purpose of teamwork. Children under eight years find co-operative group play difficult and they need a lot of freedom to practise skills in small groups without the pressures of positional play. They need a lot of equipment, too, because they are not willing to wait their turn (Schembri 1980, p.4). In Western Australian junior hockey the term umpire has been replaced by 'guide' to try and express more truly the role of that person in helping players understand the game they are playing and improve the standard of their play.

Don Morris (quoted in Pascoe 1978, p.50) has suggested that just as games should be modified to suit the physical development of the child and concentrate on skill learning, children should be allowed the responsibility of altering the rules they play by. They will gain confidence from simplified games which they can play with the chance of some success even if they are not very good. These games are based on participation not exclusion, unlike competitive team games. Nor should we lose sight of the value of unstructured play. Bengtsson (1979, p.450) Pang (1973b, p.12) and Schembri (1980, p.5) provide compelling evidence on the importance of play in the child's life.

By repetition of movements the child increases his range of motor co-ordination, while group play encourages the process of socialisation and fantasy and dramatic play develop the imagination and creative capacity. Through play children adapt to their physical and cultural environment, form their own identity and prepare for adulthood. Play is a freely chosen activity which may commence or terminate at will which children can use to test themselves but abandon if it becomes too stressful. Highly organised sporting situations do not allow the child this type of freedom, particularly when outside influences such as the opinion of parents and coaches make it a 'serious' activity with specific goals to be accomplished. Adults should always allow ample time for children to simply play.

Competition or, Who needs games nobody loses?

The following quotations give some idea of the extent of the debate on one of the most controversial areas of junior sport, competition.

> For us, victory is so important, success is so important. For little boys, fun is more important than to win the match ... Play is more important than victory, and skill is also more important than fitness for this age group ... A boy of ten years is *not* a little adult ... He is a perfect human being of ten years. His way of thinking, his way of seeing things is different from the adult way of seeing things, and therefore, we must not judge boys with our adult concepts. (Cramer 1973)

> [There is a] subtle difference in playing to win and playing to defeat someone else. Today, as I observe many contests and competitions, I feel we are playing to defeat, to humiliate the opposition. (Robbins 1977, p.10)

> Most junior schools, particularly urban schools, have yet to establish a tradition in games which suits the development of the children, and which is not merely a secondary school programme watered down. Too often the games in an urban school are dominated by the desire to produce a school team in some national game; pitches are planned and apparatus

bought to meet this demand and although a few exceptional children may flourish under these conditions most of them are not ripe for district competition. (Great Britain Ministry of Education 1953, p.11)

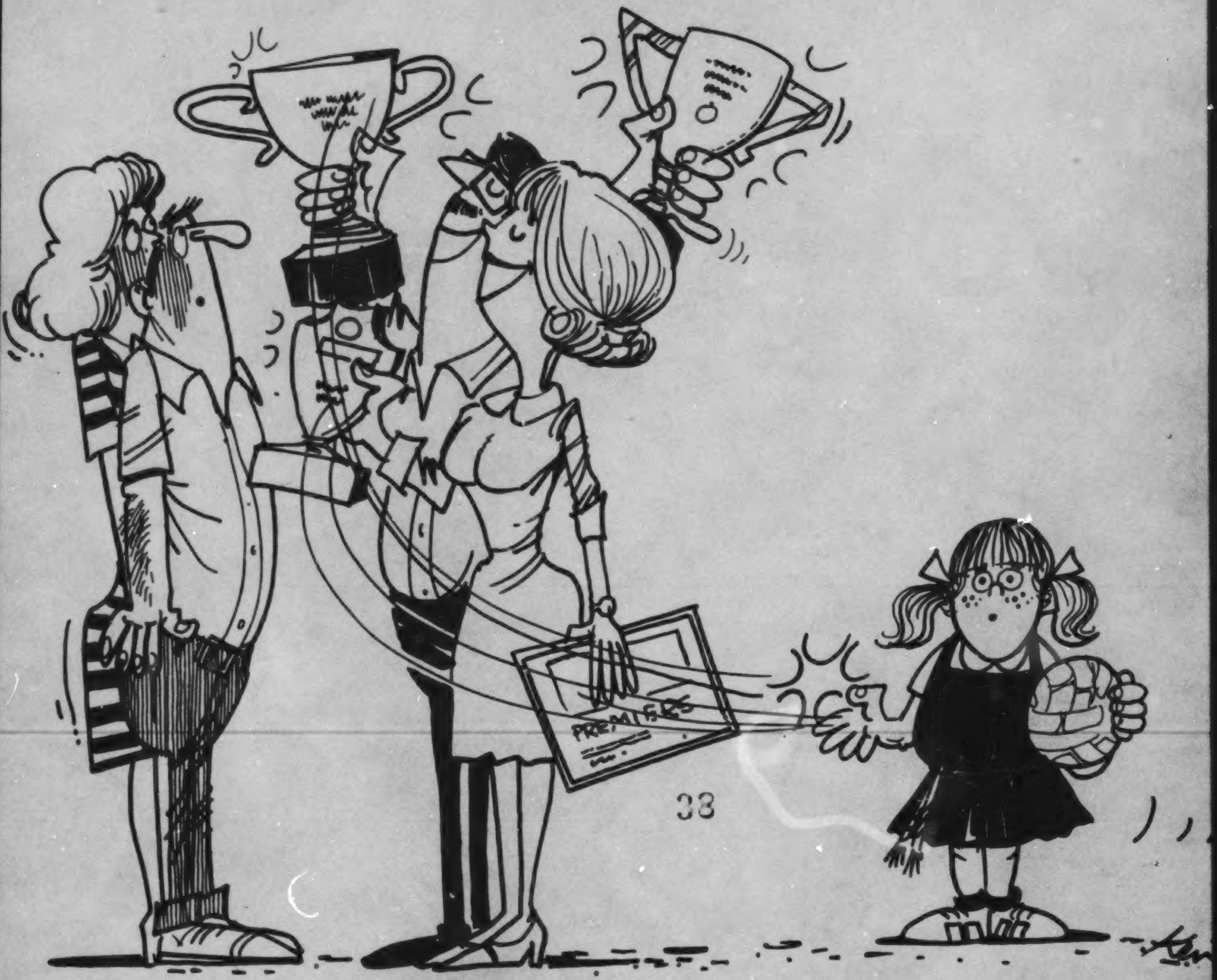
I believe that organised sports are neither universally good nor universally bad for children ... I am still convinced that sport for children has a tremendous positive potential. Whether this potential is realised depends on how the programmes are organised and supervised. The issue is not whether junior sport should exist (in my opinion they will continue to grow) but rather, how can we increase the likelihood of favourable outcomes? (Parkin 1978, p.52)

If children enjoy organised sport it really needs no further justification. If children express more positive attitudes towards health, fitness and relaxation as a consequence of their experiences, the value of organised sport is certainly reinforced. However, if particular attitudes towards the values of friendliness and fair play are decreased through sport experience, then certainly some changes in the organisation of children's sport need to be considered. (I. Robertson 1979b, p.11)

The Chinese proclaim that the fundamental objective of developing physical culture and sports in China is to build up the people's health, increase their courage, will-power and tenacity and foster their collective spirit of unity and co-operation. This determines, they say, that it is necessary to implement the principle of 'friendship first, competition second'. (Pang 1979, p.2)

If parents are so inclined, they may permit their son or daughter to enter competitive swimming at the age of 3, to play ice hockey or race go-karts at the age of 4, to compete in baseball, bowling, soccer, or tennis at the age of 6, or to race motor cycles and bicycles at the age of 8. For most of these sports, the 4 - to 8 - year - old can compete to earn not only a national title, but cash prizes, medals, and trophies which often stand taller than the recipients. (Martens 1978, p.9).

If sport does act ... to select those who exhibit dominance, drive, aggression and social integration (the supposed traits of the successful young athlete) it automatically rules out many kids. If sport thereby selects 'the leaders of the community', as many people assert, perhaps that's why our society is in such a hell of a mess. Perhaps we need to rethink our values about sport and society, restructure sports to attract more children, to develop competent, co-operative and independent people who each experience success in their own way and have a sense of self-respect. (Edgar 1975, p.344)


PREMIERS

Why compete?

Mandle (1974, p.5) has pointed out that more sport is now being played world-wide than at any time in history. The increase began 100 years ago and coincided with the growth of industrialisation and urbanisation, reflecting a surplus of time and energy due to shorter working hours, better health, higher wages and modern facilities and equipment at home and work. The industrial world is organised and competitive and this is carried over into the sports people play. He notes, however, that sport can also be seen as a reaction *against* modern civilisation and that success in sport is sought to compensate for failure, frustrations and tensions of life.

Success is certainly one of the most important values in Western Society and this must be accepted as being one of the root causes why adults want to see children compete and why at quite an early age children manifest competitive tendencies. The influence of televised sport with its emphasis on winning should not be underestimated. It clearly influences many parents, coaches and players, who expect the child to accomplish professional skills which will make them winners. Geoff Watson (1975, p.112) suggests, too, that in our competitive society parents, although responsible for the child, no longer feel capable of socialising or preparing him for adult status and have to rely on other agents (e.g. the mass media, school, and the peer group) to complement their attempts. Sport, he believes, is seen by parents as a method of evaluating *their* success and the child's development.

This, of course, may be said of other activities a child takes up e.g. ballet, music lessons etc. but undoubtedly sport has a special place in Australian society and, therefore, in the development of the child's self-concept.

Adults seem anxious to justify competitive sport on the grounds that it teaches a sense of 'fair play' and an healthy acceptance of victory and loss. Yet American studies have found that sporting children's concern for fairness *decreases* with age while their concern for victory increases. These studies have been substantiated by studies with children in Adelaide and Perth by Ian Robertson (1979b) and Malcolm Wells (1975). The desire for success at its most extreme leads children to aggressive, even violent, behaviour which has been a problem in American junior sport for some time. Some commentators (Albinson & Andrew 1976, p.184) believe that such behaviour is learned by example on the sports field and positively reinforced because it is condoned, if not encouraged, by coaches and spectators, notably parents. The end result is that many other parents become fearful about allowing their children to play competitive sport. This is the case with Canada's great national sport, ice hockey. The answer is not, of course, more protective equipment but greater control of coaches, players and spectators and the suspension of those who exhibit aggressive behaviour.

However at a more basic level we should look at children and competitive sport. As Dettmar Cramer (1973) wisely remarked, children join a sport to have fun and participate with their peers. In fact, as American researchers have found, young children who were asked whether they would rather be a substitute player in a winning team or actually play in a losing team almost invariably chose the latter. This is not to say that winning doesn't count at all or that children don't like recognition for their achievements. But they will enjoy a game because they participated and not mind losing unless adults who are preoccupied with the outcome of the game blame them and exalt the winners. As Malcolm Wells (1976, p.37) has noted, the initial motive to play may be fun but if fun becomes associated with success then it will follow that the losers will come to believe they can't have fun. Prizes, publicity, large audiences, and favoured treatment by parents and friends can be the extrinsic rewards for playing, thus undermining the earlier intrinsic rewards (fun, participation, use of skills) which motivated the player to take up the sport. For the losers the externally imposed stress of competition and the high expectations of the adult world can undermine his early enthusiasm and cause him to drop out. It is worth noting that studies (Thomas 1977, p.125) have shown that players who are constantly on winning teams develop positive feelings about themselves so that they attribute occasional failure to 'bad luck' rather than lack of skills, remain confident about future success and believe individually they played well though other team members did not. Conversely teams which mostly lose attribute this to a low ability, attribute a win to good luck and do not feel confident about future success. Failure did not stimulate more effort but tended to make them drop out. Schembri (1980, p.7) notes that the best performers tend to set their expectations near or below their actual performance level, ensuring frequent experiences of success while the less skilled set a standard too far above their performance and so experience repeated failure until they finally lack the desire to perform at any level.

Given the number of losers in a tournament series the number of players who end up with positive feelings about their capabilities is a very small proportion of the players. Perhaps the final comment should be from the work of Don Morris (1976) who has found after extensive research that if children are allowed to make up or change the rules of a game, they design a game in which most of them are successful most of the time.

What should be done about Junior Competition?

Staniford (1976, p.144) suggests that the traditions of 'having a go' at new skills, playing a game for the pleasure of it and for the opportunity to make friends and relax from the pressures of work are strong in Australia and should be highlighted once again. He points out that tennis and swimming are sports where basic skills are often taught within the family at an early age. Participation is high because of early parental encouragement in a non-competitive environment. He suggests that perhaps the best preparation for the young child in the later handling of conflict and competition would be the experience and mastery of a wide variety of skills and activities. Instead of imposing specialisation early in life this would give the child a range of activities from which to choose and ensure a balanced physical development. Families can do much in this area but schools perhaps can do even more to create the opportunities for a wide variety of activities. Successful participation in properly modified games where the emphasis on winning and score keeping is reduced, is likely to encourage the child to progress to adult competitive games when he is physically and emotionally ready for them.

Surely, too, the tendency cited by Martens (1978, p.9) of instituting competition at younger and younger ages should be halted. Competition should probably be eliminated altogether for under 10 year olds and should most certainly be graded so that the experience of stress can be increased gradually and always be within the level of tolerance of the child. To do this, several levels of activity should exist within a sport, to give each child an opportunity to fit in at a level which meets his needs.

Certainly children should be encouraged to regard the game seriously enough to give their best but for the sake of the team and themselves and not for spectators (adults, coaches etc.). Or as Henderson (1977, p.31) suggests they should be involved in *indirect* (against themselves) rather than *direct* (against another individual) competition. If they are encouraged to improve upon their own performances and if their motives of fun and participation are recognised as of positive value then their sporting environment can only be improved. Adults will be providing the kind of leadership children need.

Nettleton's studies (1975b, p.23) of Victorian adolescents have shown that participation rates are much higher in casual games than in organised, competitive sport because they appeal to those who are not prepared to accept the restrictions associated with membership of a competitive team such as regular training and matches.

They like the idea of sport for fun, fitness, fellowship and relaxation. This should be borne in mind for young children too. Competition so often means intensive preparation which deprives the child of a variety of other activities which should be just as important in his life.

Recently in Canada and America sporting organisations have provided for those who wish to play team sports casually. The organisation arranges for a ground, an umpire, and equipment to be regularly available and teams are made up of people who wish to play a social game. Such an informal arrangement for team games would be good for Australian children. The umpire could also act as coach. There would be no emphasis on keeping scores and the whole atmosphere would be free of the spirit of competitive rosters. The popularity of Life games successfully promoted as part of the Life. Be in it programme, is an indication that many Australians would be receptive to such opportunities. Life. Be in it has reached many Australians through skilful marketing and the philosophy behind such programmes could be promoted to heighten awareness of their value.

Terry Orlick (1978) has outlined a whole range of *co-operative* games based on traditional children's games from many cultures and existing adult games. Orlick (1978, p.7) has been concerned at the destructive effects of unsuccessful sporting experiences and suggests that with co-operative games the players

> must help one another by working together as a unit - each player being a necessary part of that unit, with a contribution to make - and leaving no one out of the action to sit around waiting for a chance to play. The fact that children work together toward a common end, rather than against one another, immediately turns destructive responses into helpful ones: players feel that they are an accepted part of the game, and thus totally involved.
> The result is a sense of gaining, not losing.

Orlick (1978, p.68) quotes one successful American programme which used the following principles:

(a) no officials - self control and peer control;

(b) minimal, flexible rules to be agreed on at the beginning of a game;

(c) no extrinsic rewards (trophies etc.);

(d) score keeping optional and no league statistics kept;

(e) team numbers must be equal but may be of any number and players may be substituted at any time they choose;

(f) length of the game and breaks to be determined by the teams;

(g) minimal stops in play because there are no officials and simple rules;

(h) everyone is eligible to play and the lack of rigid rules reduces the emphasis on comparing individual standards of play.

It is suggested that schools, instead of concentrating on teams should be implementing such programmes to counteract the competitive bias of junior sport. The Queensland Department of Education (1979a) has taken a lead in this area with its Physport programme.

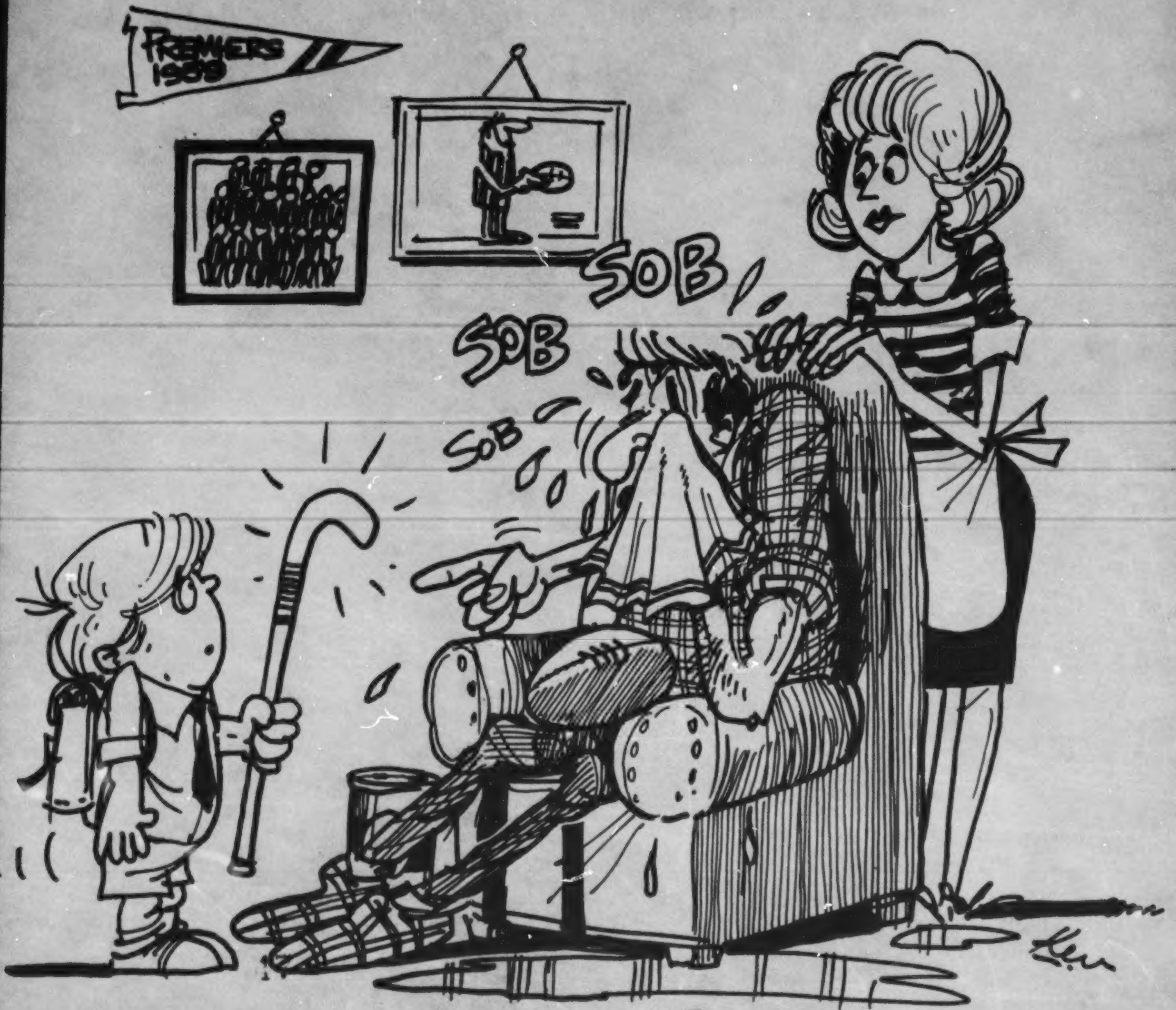
> The specific intent of the program is to de-emphasize overcompetitive sports and to foster participation which emphasises: co-operativeness, ability to work persistently at long term goals, self-acceptance, respect for others and the ability to handle success or failure, skill acquisition development and fitness for living and recreation.

Bill Henderson (1977, p.30) has adopted *alternative games* for his Victorian primary school, believing that community sporting bodies already provide a forum for children who are keen to compete. Other schools should give serious consideration to redressing the balance in favour of 'playful programmes' as Orlick calls them.

David Parkin (pers. comm., 1980) suggests that the school should be responsible for the teaching of skills with minor game application and the community (with assistance from educators) should organise all under age competition out of school hours. The school could perhaps provide equipment, facilities and personnel. Donnelly (1978, p.127), too, suggests that community organised weekend sports might draw children into a wider range of sports than the school offers and it would mean that they would establish an identity with the local area which would continue after leaving school. Pang (1973b, p.12) suggests that the community should facilitate recreational activities such as bushwalking, gymnastics, and tabloid sports as an alternative to competitive sports.

Coaching Junior Players

> Another coach told his team after a loss, 'You embarassed me, you embarassed your families, and your home town. You ought to be ashamed of yourselves'. And like most 12 - year - olds would, the kids cried. (Bryn 1974, p.40)


PREMIERS
1969
SOB
SOB
SOB
Ken

> It was probably one of the Council's clinics [i.e. the Junior Football Council of Victoria's coaching clinics] which a woman reader phoned me about yesterday. 'Junior football is not all rough', she said. 'I was watching a game of the under 10's and there was a beautiful young man who was umpire. Everytime he gave a decision against somebody, he'd stop the play, gather the boys around him and explain why he'd done it. He'd also sing out bad luck or good luck to players, depending on what was happening. You could sense that the children were obviously enthralled and were playing just for the joy of it. You couldn't call it a match. There was none of that horrible aggression about it'. (Lahey 1978)

> Children are also impressionable and will adopt the values and behaviour displayed by coaches and parents. The attitudes that children adopt towards referees, fellow team members, winning, losing, playing within the rules of the game, and even their feelings towards themselves are dictated by the adults with whom they come in contact, especially those they respect or regard as important. (Morton & Docherty 1980, p.5)

It is to be hoped that the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme instituted in 1979 by the Australian Coaching Council can influence sporting bodies to introduce particular programmes for the coaching of juniors. According to the Confederation of Australian Sport Coaches Assembly (V. Beitzel, pers. comm., 1980) the National Coaching Directors 'put *prime responsibility* for effecting needed changes in attitudes and practices on the *coaches of sport*.' C.A.S.C.A. has collected information from the National Coaching Directors for a position paper on junior sport and its 1980 Sport Australia Assembly conducted in each Australian capital city featured 'Children in Sport' as the opening plenary session topic. The message which comes from these meetings and papers is that among some people there is a considerable awareness of the problems in junior sport and concern to find solutions. The publications by Nettleton (1980) and Pyke (1980) for the Australian Coaching Council should be recognised as positive steps towards improved coaching for juniors.

Despite work already done by organisations such as the Junior Football Council which trains coaches for the task, there are still too many people who behave like the coach in the opening quotation. It is still common practice for the best coach to coach the best, or most senior, players, while the least experienced and able takes the juniors. They may be teachers who know very little about the particular sport they are required to coach or, more probably, they are adults who know a lot about the sport but not enough about children.

Volunteer coaches should be commended for the time and effort they put into coaching but they ought to be people who put the child first and the sport second. They 'should always be mindful that sports are intended to serve the child instead of the child serving sport'. (Smoll 1979, p.175)

In brief, it is suggested that a good coach:

(a) should not indulge in heroics, exhorting the child to play for his parents, his coach, his school or his country;

(b) should never humiliate a child either by tactlessly eliminating him from a team or berating his lack of skill when playing;

(c) should not keep a child playing in one position because he happens to do it well;

(d) should not institute unreasonable training schedules which tire or bore the child and prevent him from doing other activities;

(e) should be able to devise a programme in which as many children who wish to can participate at the level of competition which suits them, and which gives them ample opportunity to learn and practise skills needed for every position in the game;

(f) should be able to justify the programme to parents so that they understand its purpose;

(g) should always encourage children in their sport so that they enjoy it and gain in confidence even if they are not very good;

(h) should always be able to recognise exceptional talent and help these children to fulfil their potential;

(i) should help children set realistic standards for performance so that they do not fail repeatedly and finally give up.

In brief, coaches need special preparation in the pyschology and biology of early childhood so that they understand the purpose of modified approaches to junior sports programmes. No parent would allow his child to be taught or treated by an unqualified teacher or doctor and it is time that parents and administrators ensured that coaches are also trained personnel.

Parents and Junior Sport, or, Why not give games back to children?

> One mother told a son who wanted to quit the football team 'It will break your father's heart if you quit'. Should a seven - year - old boy who doesn't want to play football bear the guilt of breaking his father's heart? (Bryn 1974, p.41)
>
> I have seen some children's 'sporting' contests degenerate into more or less open warfare under some of the pathetic, ego-tripping adults who infest junior sports generally. (Schroder 1975, p.1)

> ... if kids' football does not turn boys into men it certainly turns men into boys. (Underwood 1975, p.92)

It should be noted at the outset of this section that there are many parents who constructively support their children's involvement in sport for the pleasure it gives them. Sport is probably just one of a number of activities that they encourage their children to pursue. Other parents destroy their child's interest because they offer no support or interest in the activity. The group that is of greatest concern, however, is the aggressive parent who destroys sports for children because of their anxiety to see their child win. The A.B.C. produced a film in 1975 called *The Ugly Parent* which highlighted the problem and which received national publicity, yet the problem is still endemic in junior sport. It would seem that the motivation for these parents stems from several desires:

(a) to experience success which is lacking in their adult world;
(b) to see the child achieve the same or greater success than they did as a child;
(c) to see the child accomplish sporting success which completely eluded them as a child;
(d) to gain some reward for the emotion and energy they have expended in training and encouraging the child;
(e) to gain prestige and status through organising clubs and competitions for junior sport;
(f) to see their child make a career in professional sport.

In support of this last point one researcher (Kline quoted in Bryn 1974, p.41) has noted that fathers of boys between 8 - 12 years seem to take sport more seriously than fathers of older boys because at that age the fathers have visions of star players. As the boys get older and obviously are not going to realise these expectations, the fathers lose interest.

The result of such parental aspirations is to impose false external motivations on the child and destroy his interest in sport through the stress of unrealistic aims and the pressure to win. Neumann (quoted in Watson 1977a, p.15) has suggested that from his research it is obvious the child needs the *locus of control* of the sporting activity to be within himself, not externally engineered by an adult. The motive is within the activity itself - the opportunity to utilise acquired skills and experience in the company of peers - and does not require the external rewards adults seem to think necessary when organising junior sport. In fact Jerry Thomas (1977, p.126) has suggested that external rewards lead to a breakdown in the child's intrinsic interest in the activity. When they are rewarded for doing something they enjoy doing they begin to see the reward as the reason for doing it and lose interest. Instead of the rewards in the form of pennants, trophies, trips and uniforms (usually miniature versions of adult ones!) it is suggested that the money should be put towards facilities for all and more thought should be given to making the activities themselves more enjoyable to keep children playing.

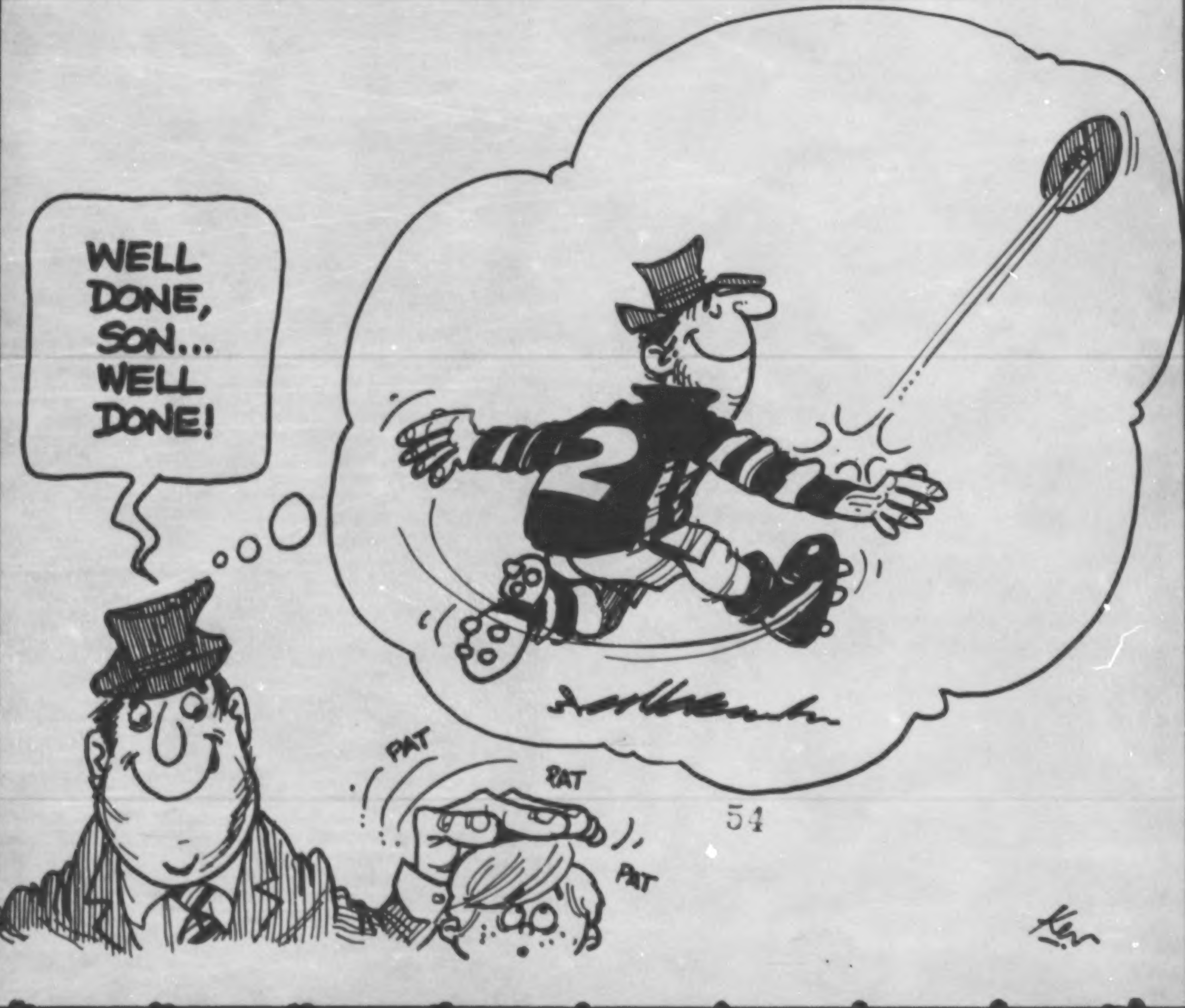
The domination of junior sport by adults plus organisation and competition at increasingly earlier ages extinguishes the spontaneous subculture of children's games (including traditional games) which has been a characteristic of most societies. In this way children are being deprived of fun and learning experiences, including the ability to organise and carry out activities without adult instigation or supervision. Instead of learning to formulate and implement their own rules for games they only learn to obey adult rules, many of which are meaningless to them.

Sport *can* provide a common interest for parents and children and bring them closer together and give the child a sense of greater status in the family, which improves his self-esteem. But if unreasonable expectations of the child's performance are held then sport becomes a source of tension within the child and the family.

In swimming, for example, where the talented must be coached from an early age to achieve the youthful success that is characteristic of the sport many young children are pushed into rigorous schedules. This places some strain on all members of the family who may feel resentment when the child is not successful. This is possibly because he is not talented enough to justify (if indeed it can ever be justified) intensive training.

Also, as has been found with ice hockey in Canada, rigorous training schedules can mean the child is not free to join his family in other equally important pursuits.

Parents should let their children choose their sport freely, though with some guidance to help the child find sports which suit his


WELL DONE, SON... WELL DONE!
PAT
PAT
PAT
2
Ken

physique. More importantly the child should be allowed to choose his level of involvement and be given sympathetic support whether he wishes to play casually or competitively and whether he performs well or poorly. While the child should be taught to respect any commitment he makes to a team or a programme, parents must remember it is only a game.

The use of stimulants, or even vitamin tablets in quantity, which is not unusual in junior sport can only be equated with horse 'doping' and is immoral, apart from the harmful physical effects.

In Watson's study (1977b, p.15) of children in a modified competitive programme of hockey he noted that the parental involvement was very low. He concludes:

> The obvious explanation for this is that when games do not have a logical beginning, end and normal format their appeal as contests declines dramatically.

Perhaps this will prove to be another advantage of modified sports. As long as the game remains the same as the adult one it will be judged by competitive adult standards. If the game is changed so that it is more suitable for the physical and emotional development of the child, the spectators, if made aware of the purpose of the changes, will view it differently. It can be respected in its own right as a legitimate form of sport with the emphasis on participation, skill learning and enjoyment for the child's benefit. There is still a great deal of work to be done to convince some of those presently involved in junior sport. The following comment by a junior football coach (Cunningham quoted in *Modifications in Junior Sport* 1978, p.17) illustrates the problem.

> These handbooks on modified rules are all very well; they're written by academics and they look all right in theory, but children won't have a bar of them.

When one reads such a comment it is hard not to assume that it is the adult who is hostile to the idea of modified sports and the children, if this is indeed their attitude, have taken it because of adult influence. Changing the attitudes of many adults involved in junior sport will not be easy but is essential if children are to enjoy their sporting experience more.

Dropping out of Junior Sport

Many commentators have remarked upon the decline of interest in sport at adolescence. Although it may be attributed to some extent to the fact that the adolescent has many new interests there are those who believe present junior sporting conditions are leading many to drop out. The following quotations are indicative of the concern felt, although Nettleton provides a contrary view in the final remark.

> The major feat [fact?] that sports administrators now face in Australia is that they may be responsible for a drop-out rate that has turned a generation of young people away from physical activity, causing them to suffer alarmingly low levels of health and general fitness. (Watson quoted in *Modifying Sports for Children* 1979, p.33)
>
> Pre-adolescent boys in the Local Government Area of Salisbury are extensively involved in adult organised sport programmes. While intrinsic rewards provide the main motivation for participation, problems related to the winning emphasis superimposed by adults are reflected by a high drop-out rate. The boys endorse adult participation although a conflict in values is apparent particularly concerning extrinsic rewards. (I. Robertson 1979a, p.5)

> While at school they are provided with a lot of organised and competitive sport. Do we put them off further sport, like we do with education or religion, by the way it is handled within the school system? ... If our sports programmes in schools were working, then our present facilities wouldn't be able to cope with the number of youths who had left school and were wanting to use them. (Donnelly 1978, p.126)
>
> One child said: 'I sat all lunch time on the edge of the basketball court hoping to have a game, but the teacher said I couldn't play because I wasn't good enough. How do I get good enough when I can't use the court and play with the good ones?' (Henderson 1977, p.30)
>
> There are very few organisations, adult education classes, community health ventures, etc. that can retain interest of 25 - 30 per cent of their clientele over a period of ten years. Yet participation in sport appears to be of this order in a number of industrial countries ... Perhaps we should ... ask - 'What is it about the sporting experience that appeals to so many for so long?' (Nettleton, 1979, p.2)

Despite Nettleton's defence of the numbers who remain in sport over a period of some years it is still true to say that the drop-out rate gives cause for considerable alarm. For example it has been estimated that between 80 - 90% of Canadian children drop out of sporting programmes by the age of 15. The Australian Youth Say Report of 1975 indicated that both individual and team sports were less attractive to boys and girls in later adolescence. (quoted in Robertson 1979b, p.1) A preference for individual, rather than team sports, because they can be played non-competitively as well as competitively has also been noted. (Schroder 1975, p.1)

Ian Robertson (1979b, p.1) suggests that adults should know more about why children are attracted to sport in the first place, also what they expect to derive from their involvement and whether they are satisfied or not, if the drop-out rate from junior sport is to be halted. Parkin

(1980a, p.13) and Evans (1980, p.14) have also recognised that few researchers have consulted children about the need for modifications and their opinions about existing modifications although it seems clear that their appreciation of the value of modifications and their acceptance of change is considerably higher than adults. Children often do not know what they think and feel (as distinct from what adults impose on them as acceptable) or if they do they have difficulty in expressing it.

From research already done we know something of the personality of the sporting child. Orlick (quoted in Cratty 1974, p.10) has found that 8 - 9 year old hockey players in his survey were more venturesome, tough-minded and extroverted than children not participating in sport. Nettleton (1975b, p.19) suggests that the child who does not feel restricted in his home or school life is the one who most readily submits to the discipline of a team. Sheehan and Alsop (1972, p.41) support the contention that sports participants do possess more socially desirable personality characteristics than non-participants but suggest that they do not assimilate the traits from the sporting environment but enter sport with them. Sport does not significantly change personality as far as has been determined. Shouldn't we be asking why these children with favoured personality characteristics are leaving sports in large numbers?

Or, more importantly, what about the other drop-outs from sport who do not figure in the statistics? There are those who are too fearful of failure even to try to get into a team, or those who try but are eliminated by the coach at the beginning of the season. Then there are those who stay for a short while but get bored and frustrated because they are on the sidelines and never allowed to play.

The years from 6 to 12 appear to be critical in the child's emotional development. This period has been described as the crisis of 'industry and inferiority' in which the child develops a strong sense of initiative or industry unless hindered by a sense of inferiority. (Schembri 1980, p.10) If the child experiences too much competitive success he becomes aggressive and self-centred. He also tends to get tired of 'performing' and of easy success. 'I know a girl who has 65 trophies in her basement and she quit sport at twelve years of age'. (Robbins 1977, p.10) If his success was based on earlier maturation than his peers he may find it hard to adjust when they catch up. If the child is a loser he experiences a loss of self-esteem and confidence. Surely it would be better not to divide children into 'winners' and 'losers'. If their expressed desire of achieving friendship, skills, fun, and participation through joining in a sport are recognised and catered for, there will certainly be better adult-child relationships, a higher level of skills developed, more enthusiasm for life-long sporting activities and fewer drop-outs.

Only in sport are children expected or allowed to operate at the adult level and as Beisser (1977, p.14) remarks:

> Although thoroughly familiar with sports activities at ever-earlier ages, American boys have little first-hand knowledge of modern occupational roles to which they might reasonably aspire. Most prepare themselves in sports for roles that will never be realized, and as 'has beens' by their teens, they join the army of spectators.

Sexism in Junior Sport

> A girl on third base kept dropping the ball. One of the boys pushed his mate towards the base shouting to the girl 'Get off that base, you can't catch anything'. The girl replied, 'Look it's only a game'. (Hawkes, Dryen, Torsh & Hannan 1975, p.12)

From early childhood it seems girls are at a disadvantage in gaining sports skills. While little boys are encouraged to catch, throw, climb and jump, little girls are generally told such pursuits are not suitable for them. By adolescence they are having to choose between sport, which is characterised as a 'masculine' pursuit and feminity. In between babyhood and adolescence they do not seem able to make up the difference in skills. Although pre-schoolers play together, once they are at school most activities are segregated.

A survey of Australian schools indicated that more time and facilities are allotted to boys' physical education, they have a greater range of sporting activities and have the opportunity to be coached for more teams than girls. They also obtain the support of parents and teachers more readily in their sporting endeavours. (Hawkes et al. 1975, p.11)

Although myths of feminine weakness are still being perpetuated it is in fact true that pre-pubescent girls often have an advantage in speed and strength over their male counterparts and are equal in other respects such as respiratory and cardiovascular capacities. Girls enjoy sports as much as boys and are likely to derive the same benefits from it. Martens (1978, p.166) suggests, following an examination of extensive research on the subject, that there is no physiological reason why pre-pubescent girls cannot compete with or against boys. However, because of the prevailing cultural beliefs which will make it hard for boys to accept that they may be beaten by girls, he suggests that adults need to be vigilant and prepare children for victory or defeat on the basis of ability and effort which are not attributable to sex differences. Martens strongly opposes mixed games after puberty in sports where speed, strength and endurance are essential ingredients because the physiological differences between male and female are considerable with the male being larger, and more rugged.

Since Australian girls and women have greater obesity problems than males it would seem an excellent development for junior sport to encourage girls and boys to play together, sharing facilities and coaches, to bring the girls' involvement in sport to a higher level.

References

A number of the most useful papers consulted for this report were typescript working papers supplied by the authors or sporting organisations. Every effort has been made to cite these papers accurately, according to the information available, in references throughout the report.

Albinson, J.G. & Andrew, G.M. (eds.) (1976), *Child in Sport and Physical Activity,* University Park Press, Baltimore.

American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (197-), 'Policy statement on competitive athletics for children of elementary school age' in *Desirable Athletic Competition for Children of Elementary School Age,* A.A.H.P.E.R., Washington, D.C., IV - VII.

Beisser, A. (1977), *The Madness in Sports: psychosocial observations on sports*, Charles Press, Bowie, Maryland.

Bengtsson, A. (1979), 'Children's play is more than physical education, *Prospects IX,* 450 - 457.

Bennett, L., Sands, R. & Smith, R. (1976), 'Potential teaching strategies for improving self esteem and group interaction in physical education', *Australian Journal for Health, Physical Education and Recreation* April, 23 - 24.

Bennett, L. (1978), 'Play - an underrated mode of knowing', *K.T.A.V. News* September, 6.

Bloomfield, J. (1978), *The Development of Sport in Western Australia,* Report of a Committee under the chairmanship of J. Bloomfield, Community Recreation Council of W.A., Perth.

Bohn, R.W. (1976), 'A master game for teaching sport skills in elementary school', *Journal of Physical Education and Recreation* April, 23 - 24.

Brayshaw, I., Parkins, D., Aggiss, R. & Tindall, R. (1980), *Sportsmen on Sport for children,* W.A. Department for Youth, Sport and Recreation, Perth.

Bryn, K. (1974), 'Does kids' competition really make better adults?', *Science Digest* Nov., 39 - 44.

Burden, E.H. (1978), 'Matter for concern: bending rules', *School Sport*, 4 and 12.

Caldwell, G. (1975), 'The future of sport' in *Sports, society and personality.* Proceedings of conference held in May, Victorian Dept. of Youth, Sports and Recreation, Melbourne.

Carlton, R. (1977), 'Competition is a teacher', *Educational Magazine* 34, 4, 26, 28 - 29.

Coaching Review (1979), 2, May/June. Whole issue on coaching junior sport.

Coles, E. (1979), *Sports in Schools: The Participation of Girls,* Social Development Unit, N.S.W. Ministry of Education, Sydney.

Collis, K.F. (1980), 'The COPE report', *University of Tasmania News* 25 April, 4.

Corbin, C.B., Barnett, M.A. & Matthews, K.A. (1979), 'The effects of direct and indirect competition on children's state anxiety', *Journal of Leisure Research* 11, 271 - 277.

Cramer, D. (1973), 'A boy is not a little adult', *Canadian Soccer News* 3, 1.

Cratty, B.J. (1974), *Children and Youth in Competitive Sport,* Educational Activities Inc., Freeport, N.Y.

Cunningham, E. (1980), *Bibliography on children and physical activity,* N.S.W. Dept. of Sport and Recreation Library, Sydney.

Donnelly, F. (1978), *Big boys don't cry,* Cassell, Wellington.

Dowdell, T. (1980), 'Sports injuries and children's growth', *Australian Gymnast* 10, 1, Coaches Supplement, 3 - 6.

Dunn, P. (1978), The advantages of modified rules in junior sport, Professional study for the Degree of Bachelor of Education, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education, Hobart.

Edgar, E. (1975), 'Summing up the Conference' in *Sport, Society and Personality*. Proceedings of conference held in May, Victorian Dept. of Youth, Sport and Recreation, Melbourne.

Evans, J. (1979), Survey of major sports, Deakin University, Victoria (unpublished paper).

Evans, J. (1980), 'Objectivity and game modification - the next step', *Australian Journal of Health, Physical Education and Recreation,* 13 - 17.

Evans, J. & Davis, K. (1980), 'An analysis of the involvement of players in junior cricket, *Sports Coach* 4(3), 26 - 31.

Ey, W. (1975), 'Sport 'optional' for Australian girls', *Recreation* 2, November, Supplement 8, [3 - 4].

Games Teaching (1978), American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Washington D.C.

Gibson, B.J. & Watson, G.G. (1978), *Player Performance in Junior Football,* Community Recreation Council of Western Australia, Perth.

Goulburn Street School (1979), *Sport and Recreation,* Hobart.

Great Britain, Ministry of Education (1953), *Physical education in the Primary School,* Part 2 *Planning the Programme,* H.M.S.O., London.

Hawkes, P., Dryen, R., Torsh, D. & Hannan, L. (1975), 'Sexism in sport: how it happens', *Secondary Teacher* 12, 9 - 14.

Henderson, W.F. (1977), 'Alternative games', *Educational Magazine* 34 (4), 27 - 31.

Junior Hockey into the 80's: Junior Search Conference (1978), Western Australian Hockey Association, Perth.

Klafs, C.E. & Lyon, M.J. (1973), *The Female Athlete: Conditioning, Competition and Culture,* C.V. Mosby Co., Saint Louis, Miss.

Lahey, T. (1978), 'Who makes the little boys cry?', *The Age* 26 May.

Magill, R.A., Ash, M.J. & Smoll, F.L. (eds.) (1978), *Children in Sport,* Human Kinetics Publishers, Champaign, Ill.

Mandle, B. (1974), *Winners can laugh: Sport and society,* Penguin, Ringwood, Vic.

Martens, R. (1978), *Joy and Sadness in Children's Sports,* Human Kinetics Publishers, Champaign, Ill.

Michener, J.A. (1976), *Michener on sport,* Secker & Warburg, London.

Modifications in Junior Sport (1978), Report of dinner meeting No. 1, August, Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Victorian Branch).

Modifying Sport for Children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens College of Advanced Education, Adelaide.

Modifying Sports for Children (1979), Report of a seminar, August, Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Western Australian Branch), Wembley, W.A.

Morris, G.S.D. (1976), *How to Change the Games Children Play,* Burgess Publishing Co., Minneapolis, Minn.

Morris, G.S.D. (1978), 'Let's give the games back to the children' in *Games Teaching,* American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Washington, D.C.

Morton, A.R. & Docherty, D. (1980), 'Guidelines for coaches and parents involved in junior sport', *Sports Coach* 4 (3), 5 - 7.

Nettleton, B. (1975a), *Factors Affecting Recreational Choice among a Group of School Leavers,* Victorian Dept. of Youth, Sport and Recreation, Melbourne.

Nettleton, B. (1975b), *Role Performance and Participation in Sport,* University of Melbourne.

Nettleton, B. (1979), 'The social institutuon of sport, today and tomorrow', in *Sport Today: Health or Disability?* Proceedings of seminar held in June, Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences, Melbourne.

Nettleton, B. (1980), *You're the coach!: an introduction to coaching,* A.G.P.S., Canberra.

Nicholls, P. (1976), 'Casual team sports play', *Recreation Lines,* 4 - 5.

Oglesby, C.A. (1978), *Women and Sport: From Myth to Reality,* Lea and Febiger, Philadelphia, Penn.

Opie, I. & P. (1969), *Children's games in street and playground,* Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Orlick, T. & Botterill, C. (1975), *Every Kid can Win,* Nelson-Hall, Chicago.

Orlick, T. (1978), *The Co-operative Sports and Games Book: Challenge without Competition,* Pantheon Books, New York.

Pang, H. (1973a), 'The biology of competitive school sports', *Australian Journal of Physical Education* 60, June, 10 - 15.

Pang, H. (1973b), 'The biology of play', *Canberra Parents Bulletin* 74, 10 - 14.

Pang, H. (1974a), 'Project PEP - an innovation in physical education', *Education News* April, 12 - 15.

Pang, H. (1974b), 'School sport and heresy' in *Proceedings of the XXth World Congress in Sports Medicine* held University of Melbourne, Melbourne, 497 - 501.

Pang, H. (1979), 'Friendship first, competition second', in *Sports Today: Health or Disability?* Proceedings of seminar held in June, Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences, Melbourne.

Pang, H. (1980), 'The significance of variability in normal childhood development', *Early Childhood Bulletin* (Riverina Region) 4, 11 - 17.

Parkin, D. (1978), 'Parents and junior sport - a personal opinion', *Sports Coach 2* (4), 52 - 53.

Parkin, D. (1980a), 'Children's sport - equalizing the opportunity to play', *Sports Coach* 4 (3), 13 - 15.

Parkin, D. (1980b), 'Modification of adult games for children', *Australian Journal for Health, Physical Education and Recreation* March, 30 - 31.

Pascoe, E.J. (1978), 'How sports can hurt your child', *Right Now* May, 50.

Pearson, K. (1978), 'The who and why of playing', *Sports Coach* 2 (3), 26 - 31.

Pyke, F.S. (ed.) (1980), *Towards better coaching: the art and science of coaching,* A.G.P.S., Canberra. The section on coaching juniors by R.G. Smith is particularly noteworthy.

Queensland Dept. of Education (1979a), Memorandum to principals in the Northern Region, Townsville.

Queensland Dept. of Education (1979b), The rationale for the Physport program, Townsville.

Rarick, G.L. (1969), 'Competitive sports for young boys: controversial issues', *Medicine and Science in Sports* 1 (4), 181 - 184.

Robbins, S.G. (1975), 'If the hat fits wear it. But if not - what?', *Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation Journal* May - June, 31 - 33.

Robbins, S.G. (1977), 'Motivating children in sport', *Coaching Association of Canada Bulletin* 18, July, 8 - 10.

Robertson, I. (1978), Innovations in sport organisations that cater to children, Working paper presented at S.A.A.N.Z. Conference, University of Queensland, Brisbane, May.

Robertson, I. (1979a), The socialisation of children into, via and out of sport, Abstract of paper presented at XIIth Biennial National Conference of Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Adelaide.

Robertson, I. (1979b), 'The attitudes of pre-adolescent boys toward involvement in organised competitive sport' in *Sport Today: Health or Disability?* Proceedings of a seminar held in June, Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences, Melbourne.

Robertson, M.A. (1978), 'Development implication for games teaching', in *Games Teaching*, American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Washington, D.C.

Schembri, H. (1980), Children in sport - psycho-social demands and their effects, C.A.S.C.A. Sport Australia Assembly paper.

Schroder, M.C. (1975), 'Philosophy of miniball' in *Minibasketball Convention,* Proceedings, A.B.A. of N.S.W., Sydney.

Sheehan, T.J. & Alsop, W.L. (1972), 'Educational sport', *Journal of Health, Physical Education and Recreation* May, 41 - 45.

Sinclair, A. (1980), Children in sport - physical demands and effects, C.A.S.C.A. Sport Australia Assembly paper.

Smith, D. (1976), Rugby in the school and in a modified competitive situation, Thesis submitted to the Division of Teacher Education, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education, Hobart.

Smoll, F.L. & Lefebre, L.M. (1979), 'Psychology of children in sport', *International Journal of Sport Psychology* 10, 173 - 177.

'So your child wants to go out for the team' (1977), *Changing Times,* 31 October, 35.

Sport and the Primary Child, (1978), Division of Recreation, Education Dept. of Tasmania, Hobart.

Sport, Society and Personality (1975), Proceedings of conference held in May, Victorian Dept. of Youth, Sport and Recreation, Melbourne.

Sport Today: Health or Disability? (1979), Proceedings of seminar held in June, Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences, Melbourne.

Staniford, D.J. (1976), 'Competition and the young child', *Physical Educator* October, 143 - 145.

Stevenson, K.S. (1974), 'The strong become stronger and the weak opt out', *South Australian Teachers Journal* 9 October, 3.

Stratton, R.K. (1979), 'Aggression in children's sports: a social-learning perspective', *Motor Skills: Theory into Practice* 3, 123 - 128.

Tanner, J.M. (1962), *Growth at adolescence,* 2nd ed., Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford.

Thomas, J.R. (1977), 'Attribution theory and motivation through reward; practical implications for children's sports', *Motor Skills: Theory into Practice,* 1 (2), 123 - 129.

Thomas, J.R. (1978), *Youth Sports Guide - For Coaches and Parents,* Manufacturers Life Insurance Co. & National Association for Sport and Physical Education, Washington D.C.

Tindall, R. (1980), 'A plea for small-sided games with modified rules' in I. Brayshaw et al., *Sportsmen on sport for children,* W.A. Department for Youth, Sport & Recreation, Perth, W.A., 17 - 20.

Underwood, J. (1975), 'Taking the fun out of a game', *Sports Illustrated* 43, 87 - 98.

Usher, P. (1972), The size of equipment for soccer, unpublished paper, University of Alberta, Quoted in S.G. Robbins (1975), 'If the hat fits wear it. But if not - what?' *Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation Journal* May - June, 31 - 32.

Victorian Primary Schools' Sports Association (1980), *Sports Manual,* Melbourne.

Watson, G.G. (1975), 'The meaning of parental influence and intrinsic reward in children's sports', in *Sport, Society and Personality,* Proceedings of conference held in May, Victorian Dept. of Youth, Sport and Recreation, Melbourne.

Watson, G.G. (1977a), 'Principles for the design of children's sport environments', *Sports Coach* 1 (2), 15 - 21.

Watson, G.G. (1977b), Introducing children to attractive competitive situations, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, W.A.

Watson, G.G. (1978a), *Little Athletics and Childhood Socialization*, Community Recreation Council of Western Australia, Perth.

Watson, G.G. (1978b), 'Recommendations for children's participation in sport', in *The Development of Sport in Western Australia*, Community Recreation Council of Western Australia, Perth.

Watson, G.G. (1979), 'Modifying children's sports: a case of avoiding public child abuse' in *Modifying sports for children*, Report of a seminar. August, Australian Council of Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Western Australian Branch).

Wells, M.W. (1975), The professionalisation of attitude of Perth school-children towards sport. University of Western Australia, Nedlands, W.A.

Wells, M.W. (1976), 'Putting the fun back into children's sport', *Tasmanian Journal of Education* 10 (2), 36 - 37, 43.

Wheeler, H.G. (1972), 'Values of a school sports day', *South Australian Teachers Journal* 4 (20), 4 - 5.

Wickstrom, R.L. (1977), *Fundamental Motor Patterns*, 2nd ed., Lea and Febiger, Philadelphia, Penn.

'Youth sports' (1978), *Journal of Physical Education and Recreation* March, 38 - 49.

Part II

A DIRECTORY OF SPORTS

FURTHER DOCUMENTATION OF MODIFIED APPROACHES TO JUNIOR SPORT IN AUSTRALIA

An examination of Part II will reveal the variety of attitudes adopted by national bodies to the question of modifying sport for children. A follow-up study in approximately two years' time is desirable to document developments, particularly in sports where the controlling bodies did not send replies to include in this report.

During this time it would also seem desirable that further information about modifications should be collected at some central point and disseminated through a regular newsheet. Because of their interest in the subject and their publication of the present report the Division of Recreation and the Tasmanian State Schools Sports Council have agreed to act as a clearing house for information on modified rules. Information should be sent to:

Modified Sport for Juniors
C/- Librarian
Division of Recreation
1st Floor
Kirksway House
Kirksway Place
BATTERY POINT, TAS. 7000.

The following national bodies were contacted for information on modified rules for their sport but did not reply:

CALISTHENICS Association of Australia
Flat 2
51 Robe Street
ST. KILDA, VIC. 3182

National ICE SKATING Association of Australia
1016 Doncaster Road
DONCASTER EAST, VIC. 3109

Australian Amateur ICE HOCKEY Federation
Flat 16
2A Robe Street
ST. KILDA, VIC. 3182

Australian GIRLS MARCHING Association
28 Oakleigh Road
MARION, S.A. 5043

Australian PONY CLUB Council
'Cross Country'
OCEAN GROVE, VIC. 3226

Australian TABLE TENNIS Association
P.O. Box 25
NORTH HOBART, TAS. 7000

Australian TAEKWONDO Association
22 Bay Street
MORDIALLOC, VIC. 3195

Australian TENPIN BOWLING Congress
H. & D. Building
236 Victoria Avenue
CHATSWOOD, N.S.W. 2067

Australian TOUCH FOOTBALL Association
201 Waratah Street
SUTHERLAND, N.S.W. 2232

Australian Amateur WEIGHTLIFTING Federation
P.O. Box 37
ROSANNA, VIC. 3084

ARCHERY

Archery Association of Australia
46 Airlie Avenue
PROSPECT S.A. 5082

The Association has a Junior Olympic Archer Development Programme which was introduced in Adelaide in 1979. There have also been pilot schemes in other States but it has not been widely promoted due to lack of finance. It is open to young people aged 10 - 18 years and is offered weekly through archery clubs and some youth groups. Participants receive certificates and badges on attaining certain standards and are instructed by qualified archery instructors assisted by parents who can become 'monitors' after undertaking a short course.

> The physical ability of the junior archer determines the 'draw weight' (strength) of the bow used which in turn limits the maximum ranges (in comparison with senior archers) so this then ensures the basics are modified for junior use ... [and] equipment rules ensure in all classes that all are basically using the same style of equipment. The rounds shot (number of arrows over certain distances) have been reduced to meet the requirements of the Juniors ... (R. Barter, pers. comm., 1980)

General problems noted (R. Barter, pers. comm., 1980) with the promotion of archery are that it is not an 'exciting' sport, particularly to watch, and that many children choose popular team sports rather than continue with archery. Also excellence is more often achieved with better quality, expensive equipment which parents are reluctant to provide. Perhaps the English method of dividing the competitors according to whether they are using standard or high grade equipment might well be adopted in Australia to overcome the latter problem.

Reference

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide, 36 - 38.

LITTLE ATHLETICS

Australian Little Athletics Union
118 Moreing Road
ATTADALE W.A. 6156

Amateur Athletic Union of Australia
377 Little Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC. 3000

The A.L.A.U. has produced a manual for the conduct of competitions. The information in this

> has been adapted from the rules of international athletics to suit the special needs of Little Athletics ... When an occasion arises where these simplified rules are not sufficiently explicit, the International Amateur Athletic Federation handbook and the Little Athletics handbook should be referred to. (A.L.A.U. 1973, p.3)

LITTLE ATHLETICS

Since the first competition was held in Victoria in 1964, the sport has grown rapidly in popularity with an estimated 60,000 children registered with 200 centres in 1978. The official emphasis in Little Athletics is on family involvement, and fun and fitness for the children through participation. (A.L.A.U. 197-) Personal improvement and satisfaction rather than winning are stressed. This is accomplished by achievement awards and the weekly awards to every child which record his performance. Special coaching is offered to those with ability and all children are encouraged to continue in athletics and other sports as they grow older.

The size of discus, shot and javelin are determined according to the age of the child (i.e. under 9, 10, 11 and 12 years). Similarly the bar height for the high jump event is determined by age although here, additionally, a differential exists between girls and boys. The stage of physical development which the child has reached, which is often more relevant to ability than chronological age, is not taken into account i.e. grading by height and weight should be considered as a real alternative to grading by age.

In an article 'Principles for the design of children's sport environment' Geoffrey Watson (1977, p.15) summarises the findings from his report on Little Athletics. (Watson 1978) While the article would be of interest to all those concerned with children's sport the report should be read by all those involved with Little Athletics as it investigates four major areas:

(a) Little Athletics as an agent of socialisation;

(b) The meaning of Little Athletics for children;

(c) The effect of institutionalisation upon the attraction of Little Athletics for children;

(d) Sex roles and competition in Little Athletics.

The following quotations give some idea of his major findings:

> ... Little Athletics serve as a powerful agent of socialisation - for achievement-supplementing the role of parents in training children for competences related to adult status, particularly in learning to cope with the pressures of a competitive, achievement-oriented culture. (p.28)
>
> ... in spite of the high level of institutionalisation found in Little Athletics, together with its intensity of competition children are able to preserve the elements of social reciprocity or friendship and the centrally important element of intrinsic reward and enjoyment ... how much more pleasurable the experience could be if children were permitted to co-ordinate their own play activity under the guiding but not controlling influence of adults? ... with increase in age greater autonomy is desired while the acceptance of parents as a source of influence over the organisation is not as openly received. (p.59)
>
> Girls do compete. They compete to an equal level of intensity to boys. But through sex role learning they compete for objectives which are not achievement oriented alone, but also socially oriented. (p.93)

The Amateur Athletic Union of Australia and the Australian Track and Field Coaches Association have made joint recommendations to the Confederation of Australian Sport Coaches Assembly (J. Roberts, pers. comm., to V. Beitzel, 1980) regarding junior athletes. These include:

(a) eliminating national championships and ensuring that within all States participation and performance rather than placing in an event be emphasised;

(b) that training be limited to a maximum of two nights per week so that injuries are not caused and enjoyment lost through vigorous training schedules suited only to older, experienced athletes;

(c) that every effort be made to convince parents, coaches and administrators of the potential damage of excessive training and competition;

(d) that Little Athletics clubs be linked with senior clubs to ensure continuing participation and to provide through senior athletes an example from which juniors could learn;

(e) that the maximum distance for sprints be 150 metres to reduce the amount of anaerobic work done by very young athletes.

References

A.L.A.U. (197-), *Little Athletics for family fun-fitness.*

A.L.A.U. (1973), *Manual for officials.*

Cook, B. (1980), 'Some thoughts on modification in athletics for children', *Sports Coach* 4 (3). [illegible] - 34.

LITTLE ATHLETICS

Watson, G.G. (1977), 'Principles for the design of children's sport environment', *Sports Coach* 1 (2),15 - 21.

Watson, G.G. (1978), *Little Athletics and childhood socialisation;* a report presented to the Community Recreation Council of Western Australia, Perth.

AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

National Football League of Australia
31 - 33 Albert Road
MELBOURNE VIC. 3000

Junior Football Council of Victoria
Olympic Park Administration Building
Swan Street
RICHMOND VIC. 3002

The work *Player performance in junior football* by B.J. Gibson (1978) has provided a reference point for commentators on junior football for its findings highlight many of the problems associated with the game. It found that:

> the game was not providing the same level of enjoyment or participation for all players ... there was very little evidence of team-work or co-operation on the field. The games frequently degenerated into scenes of continual

> turmoil ... [which] necessitated the umpire intervening to restart the play. The game in its present format is in no way conducive to the execution of skills by these young players ... As a result the standard of handpassing, kicking and marking is very poor ... statistics recorded at twenty four matches showed that in each game 8% (10) of the players did not receive a kick while 30% (24) did not handpass or mark the ball for the entire duration of the game ... it is essential that opportunities be provided at this junior level for the young players to consolidate what they have learnt during training sessions. It was found ... that the 'achievement mastery' element was the major attraction for the young players ... This result appears to have stemmed from the fact that parents and coaches very often seem to attach tremendous emphasis on winning and achieving success, so much so, that players tend to be distracted from the elements of enjoyment and interaction which occur between team members ... it was also shown that this motivating element diminished after playing for a number of years ... causing numbers of boys to lose interest at the age of fourteen or fifteen years and to drift away from the game ... (pp.5-7)

The South Australian National Football League introduced its modified rules as long ago as 1969. As well as reducing ground, team and football size and eliminating tackling, special emphasis is placed on skill development, enjoyment and safety rather than winning. The rules are well set out in the pamphlet *Modified rules football* (197-). The success of the programme has been noted by John Warren (1980), National Director of Coaching, when discussing the South Australian victory in the Teal Cup under 17 Australian Championships.

> Every player clearly demonstrates a background of fundamental basic skills training ... These skills have been build up against a background of participation in Modified Rules Football and assuredly are positive proof of the value of this type of game for juniors up to a pre-determined age level.

The Junior Football Council of Victoria also has several publications on its Special Laws which basically follow the South Australian modifications except that the tackle is retained. Ron Barassi (1979) has spoken out in favour of the modified rules used by the J.F.C. of V.:

> The years before 12 are terribly important in determining how much skill a player will have. In these years, he must literally spend hundreds of hours performing the skills. That's where 'pick up' games and other games kids used to play were so useful. Youngsters tired themselves out day after day performing the skills in these fun games. We all know this doesn't happen in organised premiership competitions where kids don't so much get tired of kicking, but do get tired of *trying to get a kick* ... I believe they [the J.F.C. of V.] are on the right track, as under their system, the kids *will* have more chance of learning the skills.

The popularity of these rules and the work done by the two organisations to train umpires and coaches to work with juniors, have aroused interest in other states and they have made attempts to adopt modified rules. However, dislike of change and suspicion of new ideas seems particularly strong in some quarters and it would seem that until a national policy is agreed upon many organisations will resist any local alterations.

The National Junior Football Committee has recommended to its parent body the National Football League that it endorse a modified game for national use. In late 1979 this request was referred to the N.F.L.'s Coaching Committee for its consideration. The 1980 season has seen increased support for modified rules. Latest statistics available to the N.F.C. suggest that 65% of all football played by under 10s is being played under modified rules. The National Coaching Committee is encouraging this and will consider the results at its annual meeting in November, 1980. It is expected that there will be a recommendation to the N.F.L. to have 'junior laws' accepted. 'These would be included as an alternative but not as an actual direction'. (J. Warren, pers., comm., 1980) Mr. Warren believes that regulation will be unnecessary as the benefits become obvious and that modified football will be almost universally adopted for under 10s within the next five years.

> I personally have not been aware of any harmful effects on young boys through participation in senior laws football as such. Some detrimental effects have been evidenced by aggressive and ill informed parents and officials in their attitudes to winning games played under championship conditions ... The interests of the vast majority of junior footballers are undoubtedly, best served by playing under Modified Rules. (J. Warren, pers. comm., 1980)

Mr. Warren (pers. comm. to V. Beitzel, 1980) sees unsatisfactory coaching, lack of parental control and unsatisfactory umpiring as being the main problems in junior football and believes that the training of coaches is essential so that they can educate the other adults involved with the sport.

An interesting study (P. McMillan et al 1980) has recently been conducted by some Western Australian students with nine-a-side football.

> Trials of this game have shown increased opportunity for participation, skills practice and active learning of the many facets of football. By having only eighteen players on the field, there is more exposure to play and contacts with the ball ... Zoning of the field opens up play ... A dominant player can no longer roam the field picking up kicks at will ... The system [of rotating positions and reserves] has been designed to maximise the playing time of each individual player and to ensure that all players have the opportunity to experience participating as a forward, centre and backline player.

The study opens up useful new lines of investigation to establish the best modifications for juniors in Australia's most popular sport.

References

Barassi, R. (1979), 'Footy for the small fry ...' *Australian Footballer* 3.

Gibson, B. (1977), 'Participation in junior Australian rules football', *Sports Coach* 1(3), 15 - 25.

Gibson, B.J. (1978), *Player performance in junior football: an evaluation of existing organisation and emerging problems,* Wembly, W.A., Community Recreation Council of Western Australia.

Halbert, J. (1971?) Modified rules. A discussion of the reasons for, and success of, modified football rules in South Australia.

House, M.B.S. (1977), Junior football in Southern Tasmania: a theoretical and practical guide for the parent coach. Professional study submitted to the Division of Teacher Education, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education, Hobart.

AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

Junior Football Council of Victoria (197-), *Policy for the conduct of junior football in Victoria; Primary school scheme manual;* and *Handbook*.

McLeod, N. (1978), Participation and enjoyment in primary football. Professional study submitted to the Division of Teacher Education, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education, Hobart.

McMillan, P. et al. (1980), Nine-a-side football, Advanced Football Course. Dept. of Human Movement and Recreation Studies, University of W.A. Nedlands.

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide, 1976, 6 - 10.

Modifying sports for children (1979), Report of a seminar, August, Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Western Australian Branch), 20 - 21.

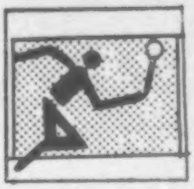
National Football League of Australia (1977), *Coaches Manual,* N.F.L., Melbourne.

South Australian National Football League (197-), *Modified rules football.*

Warren, J. (1980), 'N.F.L. News and views', *Inside Football* 17 July.

Western Australian National Football League (1979), Research conducted by participants in the W.A.N.F.L.'s Level II Australian Football Coaching Course.

Wilkinson, B. (1976), *Modified Australian Rules.* Hobart.



BADMINTON

Australian Badminton Association
32 Bird Road
KALAMUNDA W.A. 6076.

The Australian Badminton Association is not involved with the 6 - 12 years age group and has no policy on modified rules for juniors. It was suggested that the use of expensive feather shuttlecocks for competition games made it difficult to promote the game for children. The Association suggested that the State bodies should be contacted to check rules under which juniors competed. Those States which replied confirmed that modified rules were not used. The matter had been discussed, but it was considered that modified rules were not necessary. The only variation was that some Tasmanian rosters use 11 points for boy's singles, rather than 15, and 8 points for girl's singles rather than 11. Setting is not used in either of these cases.

The Welsh Badminton Union confirmed the Australian attitude to modifications and expresses it well:

> We have done no work on modified rules since we find that young children readily cope with the game of badminton without modification. This is possible because of the very light racket and shuttlecock which even very small children can manage quite easily. Also, the game is operated under quite straightforward rules which we have found no need to adapt. (M. Fox, pers. comm., 1979).

BASEBALL

Australian Baseball Federation
P.O. Box 146
NORTH BRIGHTON VIC. 3186

Tee baseball has been adopted by the A.B.F. for children under 11 years. The rules of Tee baseball are available from secretaries of State baseball associations whose addresses may be obtained from the A.B.F.

> Tee baseball is designed to increase participation by eliminating two of the more difficult skills of baseball - throwing a ball accurately for a batter to hit and hitting a thrown ball. The ball is placed on a tee and the batter swings at the stationary ball.
>
> This adaption ensures that almost every child can hit the ball into play immediately so that more activity is created for both batting and fielding teams in the available time. (T. Jarrett, pers. comm., 1980)

The elimination of pitching reduces the physical demands on the child and the possibility of epiphyseal damage or 'little league elbow'. The use of a tee also combats the fear of being hit by a moving ball which many batters experience.

> A rubber ball is used to minimise the risk of injury to young players from hit or thrown balls. Boys and girls may play the game as mixed teams. Limited playground area can provide facilities for a large number of participants.

> Diamond size is reduced to a softball diamond's dimensions with basepaths of 60' (18.2 m) and the pitcher's plate 45' (13.7 m) from home plate and fielding gloves are the same as used by young softballers. For players to 8 years, a smaller diamond with basepaths of 45' (13.7 m) and the pitcher's plate 35' (10.6 m) from home plate. (T. Jarrett, pers. comm., 1980)

In America, baseball has received some of the fiercest criticism aimed at junior sport because of the physical injuries incurred, the intense competitiveness that emotionally damages many children and the behaviour of parents involved with the sport. Comments at a recent ACHPER Conference would suggest that despite the modification of the physical demands made on the child the other criticisms are still valid for junior baseball in Australia. (*Modifying Sports for children* 1979, p.6) An interesting study by Watson and Kando (1976) compares Little League baseball with children's play which is characteristically spontaneous and autonomous, and finds that baseball is 'highly institutionalised, ritualised and regulated *from without*' (p.291). Rainer Martens (1978, p.67) however, discusses some of the most controversial studies on Little League and concludes:

> In spite of the problems ... [it] has provided enjoyment and leadership opportunities to millions of American children, and adults as well.

The A.B.F. points out that

> Little League is only one of 10 amateur baseball organisations in that country and is the only one to promote itself as an international organisation. It is the only amateur organisation which is not an affiliate of the United States Baseball Federation and it cannot be regarded as typical of youth baseball in that country although it is the largest youth baseball organisation.

> The A.B.F. is well aware of the problems of over-organising young players and has continually introduced rules to reduce over-use of players, has a coaching programme to teach correct methods of play and to encourage the concept that sport is fun.
>
> This Federation is also very conscious of the problems young children have in obtaining satisfactory participation in competitive sport and through the Tee Ball in particular we have endeavoured to equalise the rates of participation among the team members.
>
> Obviously there will be players and coaches who have a greater than average desire to compete. The A.B.F. provides for competition by representative teams in various age groups but these teams consist only of those who wish to compete and who have been selected by experienced coaches as being physically and mentally capable. (T. Jarrett, pers. comm., 1980)

References

Martens, R. (1978), *Joy and sadness in children's sports*, Human Kinetics Publishers, Champaign, Ill.

Modifying sports for children (1979), Report of a seminar, August, Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Western Australian Branch).

Seppo-Iso-Ahola (1980), 'Who's turning children's Little League play into work', *Parks & Recreation* 15(6), 51 - 54 & 77.

Watson, G.G. & Kando, T.M. (1976), 'The meaning of rules and rituals in Little League Baseball', *Pacific Sociological Review* 19(3), 291 - 316.

BASKETBALL

Australian Mini Basketball Promotions Officer
Amateur Basketball Union of Australia
36 Albatross Road
NOWRA N.S.W. 2540

N.S.W. Basketball Sales
53 - 55 Maddox Street
SYDNEY N.S.W. 2000

Pamphlets outlining procedures for playing mini basketball are available from N.S.W. Basketball Sales. Basketball is a sport where the officials have clearly thought about the problems children experience when playing an adult game and have modified it accordingly. The rules sheet states:

> The modified rules are intended to provide for children without altering the spirit of the game, and to ensure a shorter transition from mini-basketball on to senior conditions. (A.B.U.A. 197-, p.1)

Mini basketball has been designed for primary school children and while the basic playing rules of the adult game are maintained the following modifications, in brief, have been introduced to meet their needs:

(a) Team size is reduced with a maximum of 8 players who each play 15 minutes.

(b) Playing time is reduced to fifteen minute halves.

(c) Court size is smaller so that children play across a full size court.

(d) Equipment is smaller with a basket height of 2600 mm. and balls that are 660 - 700 mm. in circumference.

Furthermore the ready substitution of players during the game and the use of children as referees and bench officials is encouraged to allow for greater participation. The adults' role is supervisory as far as possible.

> To fully achieve the aims of the games it is recommended that high powered coaching and demonstrative relatives be barred. (A.B.U.A. 1974, p.2)

Points scores, grand finals etc. are not stressed and eliminated where possible.

> Mini basketball was designed for one purpose - THE ENJOYMENT OF THE PLAYER ... Mini basketball expects to provide sound physical activity for all players, the development of co-ordination and a large range of physical skills which will be easily transferred to other sports. (A.B.U.A. 1974, p.2)

With such commendable aims it is not surprising that mini-basketball has a great following.

In compiling this report information on modifications was also received from the Canadian Amateur Basketball Association, the Basketball Association of Singapore, the Scottish Sports Council, the Welsh A.B.A. and the English Sports Council. Variations exist in team size and playing time but the Australian modifications appear to be quite satisfactory. It has been suggested (*Modifying Sport for children,* 1976, p.11) that further modification to the Australian rules might be:

(a) to allow the ball to pass backwards as well as forward over the half way line;

(b) to allow an extra step to be taken when dribbling;

(c) to change the '3 seconds' rule to 6 seconds;

(d) to have three or four ten minute playing periods rather than 15 minute halves.

Possibly the first two modifications might produce habits which would be hard to change when the player moved to senior rules. The other two suggestions seem to have merit particularly for very young children.

References

A.B.U.A. (197-), *Mini basketball rules for primary school children,* Sydney.

A.B.U.A. (1974), *Mini basketball,* Sydney.

Haywood, K. (1978), Children's basketball performance with regulation and junior-sized basketballs. University of Missouri, Dept. of Behavioral Studies, St. Louis, Miss.

BASKETBALL

Henry, G.M. (1979), 'Should the basket be lowered for young participants' *Journal of Physical Education and Recreation* 50, March, 65 - 66.

Discusses the correct height for the basket in relation to age and the development of shooting skills.

International Basketball Federation (197-), *Minibasket schools international rule book.*

Australia's rules were adopted from this work.

Kirchner, G. (1978), *Physical education for elementary school children,* 4th edn., Wm. C. Brown, Dubuque, Iowa.

Because of its sensible modifications Kirchner believes basketball should be a basic activity in primary physical education programmes. He suggests useful lead-up games and practice activities.

Miniball Convention (1975), Proceedings. A.B.A. of N.S.W., Sydney.

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide.

Modifying sports for children (1979), Report of a seminar, August, Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Western Australian Branch), Perth. 18 - 19.

Morris, G.S.D. (1976), *How to change the games children play.* Burgess Publishing Co., Minneapolis, Minn.

In this stimulating and challenging book which advocates 'games analysis' (frequently resulting in modifications to games to promote specific learning skills) Morris outlines useful 'basketball type' games.

BASKETBALL

New Zealand Dept. of Education. Physical Education Branch (197-), *Organisation for international basketball in primary schools*, Wellington.

Parkin, D. (1980), 'Children's sport - equalizing the opportunity to play', *Sports Coach* 4 (1), 13 - 15.

BOWLS

Australian Bowls Council
342 St. Kilda Road
MELBOURNE VIC. 3004

Australian Women's Bowling Council
34 Wendell Street
NORMAN PARK BRISBANE QLD. 4170

The minimum age for membership of the A.B.C. is 18 years and although both Councils are aware that bowls are played by younger people, at least at secondary if not primary school level, no official action has been taken to provide for their participation in the sport.

BOXING

The Amateur Boxing Union of Australia
27 South Avenue
DOUBLE BAY N.S.W. 2028

The A.B.U.A. 'caters only for boys over the age of 10 years, this is a universal age for boys to commence the art of boxing. In some countries however, there is now a feeling that the age should be raised to 12 years. Rules for boys boxing are standard and very elementary and could not be modified'. (A. Tunstall, pers. comm., 1979)

In fact boys box under the adult rules laid down by the International Amateur Boxing Association. The only modification, (and this is unofficial and left to the discretion of the referee) is that rounds may be of 2 mins. duration, or slightly less, rather than 3 mins.

The Schools Amateur Boxing Association in England, which is the only organisation of its type in the world, recommends that 9 years is the youngest age that any boxing training should be undertaken. Competitive boxing is not allowed before the age of 11. In S.A.B.A. competitions for under 12 year olds:

(a) The maximum ring size is 4.87 m.

(b) There must not be a difference of more than 2.5 kg. in weight and 12 months in age between contestants.

(c) Bandages are not worn.

(d) There is no counting - the contest is stopped as soon as a boy goes down from a heavy blow.

(e) Rounds are limited to one minute each.

(f) No boy may take part in more than 14 contests per season (excluding championships) and there must be three clear days between each bout.

The S.A.B.A. has found these modifications to the [British] Amateur Boxing Association's rules very satisfactory.

It should be noted however that the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, have all opposed boxing for children because of its potential for serious injury, particularly brain damage.

A discussion of the case against boxing may be read in Rainer Martens (1978), *Joy and sadness in children's sports,* Human Kinetics Publishers, Champaign, Ill. 223 - 224.

CANOEING

Australian Canoe Federation
140 Cotham Road
KEW VIC. 3101

The A.C.F. has no special provisions for juniors at present but they recognise that problems exist and recently produced a discussion paper (Farrance 1980) to try and find some solutions. The problems are:

(a) that boats are too wide for a child to get a high vertical paddling style: all boats need to be low around the cockpit to enable the young paddler to develop paddling style and need to be shorter to facilitate turning.

(b) that high quality paddles are only made in adult sizes: the child needs a shorter paddle to develop technique, the blades must be smaller to match his strength, the shaft must be narrow to enable it to be grasped firmly and twisted correctly and the weight of the whole paddle must be lighter.

(c) that existing courses are too long for children: the sprint racing events should be reduced from 500 and 1000 metres to 100, 250 and 500 metres to emphasise speed and technique and promote enjoyment rather than endurance; the slalom events should be shorter to accomodate the shorter concentration span of children and enable them to have more runs and, therefore, more opportunities for skill practice and enjoyment;

(d) that the age classifications possibly need altering: under 12, 11 and 10 for sprint racing and under 13, 11 and 9 for slalom and wildwater racing.

Reference

Farrance, J. (1980), Position paper on junior sport: canoeing, Australian Canoe Federation, Kew, Vic.

CRICKET

Australian Schoolboys Cricket Council
3 Moran Street
LAWNTON QLD. 4501

Australian Council of Cricket Unions
G.P.O. Box 2744
SYDNEY N.S.W. 2001

Australian Women's Cricket Council
4/16 Marne Street
SOUTH YARRA VIC. 3141

N.S.W. Cricket Association
254 George Street
SYDNEY N.S.W. 2000

No reply was received from the A.S.C.C. The A.W.C.C. does not have a national policy on modified cricket for girls, nor could the state bodies supply information on any modifications used.

The A.C.C.U. referred the request for information on modified cricket rules to the N.S.W.C.A. whose Director of Coaching, Mr. Peter Spence, has done a considerable amount of work on the subject. In December 1979, Mr. Spence submitted a proposal to the Australian Cricket Board Coaching Committee based on his work with juniors, particularly his activities since 1974 when the N.S.W.C.A. endorsed a policy for Sub Junior (under 12 years) cricket 'in an effort to establish realistic conditions for the participation of all youngsters'. (Spence 1979, p.1)

The policy statement is included in the book *Cricket Action*. (Spence 1975, p.50) In brief, it recommends:

(a) the use of a ball 135 g. to 142 g. in weight and 21.5 cm. to 21.9 cm. in circumference (compared with 156 g. to 163 g. and 22.4 cm. to 22.9 cm. for normal size);

(b) the use of a pitch of 18 yds. (16.4 m.) for under 10s, and 20 yds. (18.2 m.) for under 12s;

(c) a maximum boundary distance of 40 m;

(d) that a restriction should be placed on the number of overs bowled by each individual;

(e) limited batting time so that the batsman retires after 25 runs or 12 overs at the crease, which ever occurs first.

The first three recommendations are a recognition of the physical differences between the young player and the mature player while the final two prevent the game being dominated by the one or two physically strong or naturally gifted players and encourages participation by the whole team. Peter Spence recognises that 'Inactivity and the time involved for the traditional game of cricket are two of the greatest obstacles confronting the sport today' (1975, p.44) He goes on to discuss means of combating these problems: equal over matches as well as limited over bowling and limited batting, six-a-side and eight-a-side cricket, pairs competition and average cricket. Work done by Evans (1980), Evans & Davis (1980) and Foster (1980) substantiate Spence's analysis of the problems and put forward comparable proposals for change.

The Cricket Decathlon also advocated by Spence (1979) is a comprehensive programme of skills practice and introductory games to ensure the maximum participation and activity of all players who take part in all activities in turn. '... the beginning player in particular is encouraged to experience the skills of fielding, bowling, wicket-keeping, batting and running between the wickets in a situation where he is competing with himself, rather than against a sometimes superior or more physically mature opposition. Most skill activities are performed at *targets* and players score *points* for each performance ...'. (Spence 1979, p.1)

The results of Mr. Spence's proposal to the Australian Cricket Board are not yet known.

Following two recent fatalities in junior cricket the question of players wearing safety helmets has arisen. It would seem that provided players are instructed not to field too close to the batsman safety will be ensured without expensive equipment.

References

Brayshaw, I. (1978), 'Cricket and kids', *Sports Coach* 2 (1), 18 - 19.

Evans, J. (1980), Player involvement in junior sport, Deakin University, Victoria.

Evans, J. & Davis, K. (1980), 'An analysis of the involvement of players in junior cricket, *Sports Coach* 4 (3), 26 - 31.

Foster, D. (1980), 'Cricket modifications in the sub-junior (u/10 years) and junior (u/14 years) age groups', *Sports Coach* 4 (3), 13 - 25.

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide, 23 - 25.

Modifying sports for children (1979), Report of a seminar, August, Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Western Australian Branch), 21 - 23.

Spence, P. (1975), *Cricket action: an approach to teaching and coaching the game of cricket,* Cricket Association, Sydney.

Spence, P. (1979), The cricket decathlon - a realistic introduction to the game of cricket. Submission to the Australian Cricket Board Coaching Committee.

CROQUET

Australian Croquet Council
5 Alexandra Avenue
CANTERBURY VIC. 3126

The Council advises that although it is aware that some adolescents play croquet it believes it is an adult sport and not suitable for the primary school age group.

CYCLING

Australian Amateur Cycling Federation
20 Paterson Crescent
MORPHETTVILLE S.A. 5043

The Federation advises that it has a Sub-Juvenile class for children under twelve years of age. Sub-Juveniles compete under the normal general cycling rules applicable for road and track racing i.e. wearing safety helmets and obeying all traffic laws, however:

> Modifications are made to the rules limiting the maximum gear ratios to be used commensurate to the average boy (or girl) in each age group. Race distances plus the number of events that a young cyclist can contest during a racing session or on any single programme are also restricted. The accent should always be toward encouragement of personal enjoyment and minimising the competitive element by grading on ability and/or experience. (R. O'Donnell, pers. comm., 1980)

FENCING

Australian Amateur Fencing Federation
147 Mountain View Parade
MACLEOD WEST VIC. 3085

The Federation advises that there are 'under 12' State and National titles in its annual competitions. International rules are observed in every competition regardless of age, weapon, or sex.

GOLF

Australian Golf Union
3 Bowen Crescent
MELBOURNE VIC. 3004

Australian Ladies Golf Union
22 McKay Road
ROWVILLE VIC. 3178

The Unions advise that they have no modified rules for young players but in junior events they limit the number of holes played to 9.

Although the Unions did not mention it, golf clubs can be made to suit individual requirements.

References

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide, 39 - 40.

Wiren, G. (1978), 'Special instructions for juniors', *Sports Coach* 2 (2), 18 - 20.

GYMNASTICS

Australian Gymnastic Federation
P.O. Box 180
MOORABBIN VIC. 3189

Gymnastics is divided into three disciplines: men's artistic gymnastics, women's artistic gymnastics and rhythmic sportive gymnastics. The A.G.F. (1979a and 1979b) has recently published the *Men's gymnastics level manual* and *Women's artistic gymnastics manual*. A manual for the other discipline is due to appear soon.

The Introduction (1979a, p.1) states:

> It is believed that there is enough material in this manual to use as a text in schools, colleges and clubs. A feature of the Manual is the selection of levels 1 - 10. This selection has been made on the assumption that age has little to do with ability and thus the levels are ability groupings rather than age groupings. Incentives are inbuilt for gymnasts to progress from level to level ...

The women's manual also has ten levels and progress is based on skill development at one's own rate. Only at level 10 do the full international rules apply. Modifications are graduated to levels of ability in:

(a) award achievement percentages
(b) difficulty requirements
(c) apparatus heights
(d) duration of routines
(e) choreographic complexity
(f) use of equipment

Assessments for levels 1 - 4 are made by the club coach or judge in the club environment and performance of single or linked elements only, not full routines, is required. Age restrictions apply for National Championships at Bronze (level 8), Silver (level 9) and Gold (level 10) and standards. The minimum age is 11, 12 and 14 respectively.

> While it is accepted that many girls younger than the minimum ages listed can reach skill standards required the restrictions exist to protect the children from the pyschological pressures of the larger scale competition. The A.G.F. conducts the Bronze Championships separately from all other events and modifies scoring to encourage participation by teams from all States. Bronze events are small scale and low in competitive intensity. (V. Beitzel, pers. comm., 1980)

References

A.G.F. (1979a), *Men's gymnastics levels manual.*

A.G.F. (1979b), *Women's artistic gymnastics manual.*

COURT HANDBALL

Australian Handball Council
23 Lancelot Avenue
HAZLEWOOD PARK S.A. 5066

The Council advises that there are no modified rules of court handball for young children. 'Due to the very nature of this ancient game, I cannot see how any modification can be made to the play without fundamentally changing its character'. (J. Quinlan, pers. comm., 1978) However, the Council is aware that in Ireland smaller courts are built for juniors and one wall courts are used in the U.S.A. and some Australian States, which it believes are sensible modifications for young players.

The Council also makes the point that 'Handball is a non contact sport which requires very little supervision. Large numbers of school children can be accommodated at the one time, and it is an excellent method of control on school yards during recreation periods'. (J. Quinlan, pers. comm., 1978)

TEAM HANDBALL

There is no Australian national body for team handball which is very popular in Canada and England. The Canadians do not modify the game for juniors. However, the British Handball Association has given official support to a recently published book *Minihandball* (Aagaard & Skovsgaard, 1979) written by two Danish physical educators.

> The Association is only too aware of the need to take the game back to its children, because it requires only the basics of any physical education, those skills of running, jumping, catching and throwing, and all of these skills are combined in this one activity. (Aagaard et al 1979, p.5)

The aim of the book is to assist any teacher to take students through a series of exercises which build up basic skills, culminating in a game which, unlike adult team handball, can be played in a normal sized gymnasium. Three minihandball courts can be marked on one full-sized court.

> From the beginning it was obviously necessary that the size of the playing area, the number of players, their age, the markings, size of goals and size and weight of balls must all be related to one another. (Aagaard et al. 1979, p.8)

The recommendations are:

(a) The rectangular court should be 12 m. wide and 20 m. long with the goal 2.40 m. wide x 1.60 m. long. Line markings to be orange.

(b) A team should consist of 4 court players and 1 goal keeper.

(c) A leather ball 47 - 49 cms. in circumference and weighing approximately 275 g. should be used.

(d) Playing time should be 2 halves of 7 minutes.

(e) A set of rules which simplifies the conduct of the game should be used.

Rules have been devised by the British Handball Association and are reproduced in full in the book *Minihandball*. This is a most valuable book both for the practical information it contains and the philosophy behind it.

References

Aagaard, D. & Skovsgaard, E. (1979), *Minihandball,* Roskilde, Roas. A/F Mr. P. Aagaard, Post Box 173, DK 4000, Roskilde, Denmark.

Western Australia Department for Youth, Sport and Recreation (1980), *Introduction to Team Handball,* Perth.

HOCKEY

Australian Hockey Association
44 Chetwynd Street
WEST MELBOURNE VIC. 3003

Australian Women's Hockey Association
3/27 Frenchman's Road
RANDWICK N.S.W. 2031

Both the A.H.A. and the A.W.H.A. have indicated that while they are aware of modifications to the rules being used there is no national policy on the matter at this stage.

The A.W.H.A. does not consider that modified rules need to be adopted at a national level. However, Mr. Ivan Spedding, the A.H.A.'s National Coaching Director, is working on a National Coaching Scheme which will include a standard form of modified rules for junior games.

As versions of modified hockey have been received from several States it is clear that there is a 'grass roots' movement to make hockey more suitable for juniors. Comments suggest that the move is due to an awareness that mini-hockey has been successful overseas and a realisation that standard hockey rules may not promote enjoyable participation and skill learning. It is good to know that the A.H.A. is responding to this need for a national policy on hockey modification.

Examples of current modifications supplied by Mr. Spedding conform to basic principles for modifying games:

(a) Smaller fields, smaller equipment and shorter playing time, each of which reduces physical demands on the young player.

(b) Smaller teams leading to increased participation. (Dunn, 1978)

(c) The relaxation of technical rules to allow freedom of play while skills are being learned rather than only allowing play to progress when skills have been acquired.

The Western Australian Hockey Association's publication ***Midget, Mini and Micro hockey*** gives a good account of current practice. The preamble (W.A.H.A. 1978, p.1) stresses that all three are designed as introductory games for children of primary school age, not as a substitute for standard hockey. They provide:

(a) involvement;

(b) an atmosphere of encouragement for the slow developer in a non-competitive situation;

(c) an introduction to a few skills at a time;

(d) an opportunity to foster the spirit of enjoyment rather than the application of rules.

'Guides' control the play rather than umpires and they are encouraged to: 'Talk to the players. Explain your decisions. Encourage and congratulate good moves and play. Be a friend'. (W.A.H.A. 1978, p.15)

In brief, midget hockey is played on a field 20 m. x 35 m. Standard lightweight hockey sticks and standard balls are recommended. Each team consist of 3 forwards, 1 half back and 1 goalie. Pads, kickers and gloves are not used. The game consists of 5 segments of not more than 7 mins. each and players rotate their position after each segment. There is no off-side rule and no obstruction rule, although body contact is strictly prohibited. The ball may be propelled only by pushing and only the goalie may kick it. A free push may be awarded for a trap to reinforce this skill. Sticks have to be marked 30 cms. from the top of the handle. The right hand must be kept below this mark for safety and to ensure that the hand is in position for the two featured skills, the push and trap. The back of the stick must not be used.

After 8 - 10 weeks of midget hockey it is envisaged that most players will be ready to go on to mini hockey where more emphasis is placed on the skill of dribbling. The length of the field is extended to 45 m. and a second half back is introduced. Playing time increased to 6 segments of 8 minutes.

After 4 - 5 weeks players can progress to micro hockey where half a standard field or an area 55 m. x 45 m. is used for the game. A team consists of seven players and playing time consists of four quarters each of 10 mins. duration. Pushing, tapping and flicking may be used to move the ball, but hitting is permitted only from the defensive zone of a team's field. This summary only indicates some of the main features of the three stage programme and closer examination is warranted.

In Victoria the Doncaster Hockey Club's successful experience with Little Hockey competition is also worth noting. (Esselmont 1977) Here it has been found that 6-a-side hockey facilitates the coaching of basic skills and great emphasis is placed on having an adequate number of coaches for this purpose. The use of an asphalt playing surface is advocated because it promotes a marked improvement in ball control and trapping skills.

The English (Hockey Association 197-) and Dutch (Tania 197-) rules for mini-hockey should be examined by all those seriously interested in devising their own modifications,but as the A.H.A. has already begun work on a national set of rules it may be that the question will be satisfactorily resolved in the near future.

References

Dunn, P. (1978), The advantages of modified rules in junior sport, Thesis submitted to the Division of Teacher Education, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education, Hobart.

During the first season of 6-a-side hockey in Southern Tasmania in 1978 Dunn examined the number of contacts (defined as a hit, push, trap, dribble or tackle) made in the modified game compared with the standard game. He found that the average recorded by players in modified games was higher than the best player in eleven-a-side, and that even poor players in the modified games were getting as much contact as a good player in standard hockey. He also established that certain positions made far more contacts than others which justifies the rotation of players so that equal opportunity is given for skills to be developed.

Esselmont, B. (1977), Organising Little Hockey: paper ... based on the experience of Doncaster Hockey Club's six-a-side under 8 and under 10 intra-Club competition.

HOCKEY

Hockey Association (197-), *Rules of the game of Mini Hockey,*
Reader & Co., Maidstone, Kent.

Junior Hockey into the 80's: Junior search conference (1978),
Western Australian Hockey Association.

In this collection of papers the ones of particular interest are: 'Adult/Child Values' by Trevor Gallagher; 'Future of Hockey in the 80's' by John Goldie; 'Modified rules' by Ray Smith; 'Promotion and development' by Rod Rate; 'Modified rules' by Graeme Walter.

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide, 14 - 16.

Modifying sports for children (1979), Report of a seminar, August, Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Western Australian Branch), 19 - 20.

Tania, C. (197-), Mini hockey in the Netherlands.

Watson, G.G. (1977), Introducing children to attractive competitive situations: a field study application of Marten's theory, University of W.A., Nedlands, W.A.

In this study two groups of children in Western Australia were observed over a three month period, one group in a modified hockey programme and the other in a traditional hockey programme. Watson found that: 'In summary, the development of competence through its exploration [play], evaluation [modified games] and then integration [sports] is likely to ensure that the positive functions of

competition, as a form of social comparison, are retained by allowing children to freely identify their own capabilities and identity during their leisure'. (31)

West, B. (1972), *Hockey in the primary school,* 4th edn., All England Women's Hockey Association, London.

Western Australian Hockey Association (197-), *Midget hockey; Mini hockey; Play hockey.* These are the first draft of rules which were later revised (see W.A.H.A. 1978). The changes which were made in the later set of rules are worth noting.

W.A.H.A. (1978), *Midget, Mini and Micro Hockey: introductory games for beginners, experiemntal rules,* rev.

JUDO

Judo Federation of Australia
17 Forestway
FRENCH'S FOREST N.S.W. 2086

The J.F.A. advises that its main modification for junior contestants is that boys and girls under 16 years are not allowed to execute armlocks or strangles. However girls 14 years and over may compete in women's categories under full adult rules. Some states require children to have been graded to 4th kyu orange belt before taking part in contests to ensure that they have had sufficient experience to compete.

The British Schools Judo Association (with a membership of over ninety thousand boys and girls) advises that the youngest age for competition is 11 years. Classes based on age are also sub-divided by weight e.g. in the National Boys Championships for 1979 - 80 the Junior team had to be over 11 years and under 13 years on 31st August, 1979 and within this class there were four categories between 37 kilos and 50 kilos. For the open event there was a minimum weight of over 45 kilos. Armlocks and strangles are not permitted under the age of 17 years. Teams in the B.S.J.A. competitions consist of 3 members which is smaller than an adult team.

KARATE

Federation of Australian Karate-do Organisations
161 Alderton Road
CARLINGFORD N.S.W. 2118

The Federation encourages the participation of juniors. 'Our method of teaching this age bracket varies from Club to Club according to the experience of the Instructor. To my knowledge our sport does not require any special equipment for junior students apart from the obvious smaller sized uniforms and protective equipment'. (J. Newman, pers. comm., 1979) The first State championship for under 12s was held in Victoria last year. The rules used were the same as those for adults.

A book (Oyama 1969) recommended by the Federation suggests some modifications to the adult programme. It recommends the early commencement of training of body and mind for karate, but the elimination of more dangerous throws and strikes from the programme. In boys' classes the main practice movements should be empty (i.e. directed at the air rather than an opponent) versions of kicks, strikes and thrusts. The author believes that such training develops strength and speed while the actual hitting of hard objects could damage the tips of fingers, and toes and the body's nerves.

KARATE

Reference

Oyama, Masutatsu (1969), *Boys' karate,* Japan Publications, Tokyo.

KARTING

Australian Kart Association
1 Ashbourne Avenue
KINGSWOOD S.A. 5062

The A.K.A. advises that at its annual general meeting in 1979 it was agreed to introduce a Beginners Class in 1980 for children aged 7 - 12 years old. They could drive stock appearing Victa Motors not exceeding 160 cc providing State laws permit. Sepcifications and rules governing this class will appear in the 1980 A.K.A. manual.

LACROSSE

Australian Lacrosse Council
16 Deans Wood Close
WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC. 3152

Australian Women's Lacrosse Council
P.O. Box 171
LAKE BOGA VIC. 3584

Both the A.L.C. and A.W.L.C. suggested that STX ball (soft or 'no contact' lacrosse), a commercially developed game of modified lacrosse, was a safe, suitable game for young children. The game stresses passing and catching skills, teamwork and continuous action. It is suggested that 5 players per team with an unlimited number of substitutes is a good number for indoor games (using, for example, basketball court markings). Teams for outdoor games can be larger.

There are just 5 basic rules for the game:

(a) Play the ball - not the opponent (no stick or body contact allowed).

(b) Players must keep both hands on the stick.

(c) The ball must be passed over the centreline.

(d) Two passes must be made after the centreline pass before each shot at the goal.

(e) Play should be continuous.

With a slogan of 'Keep it simple - have fun', and a convenient package which contains lightweight, flexible sticks, balls, goals and a rule book the success of STX ball is not surprising. Kits are available through A.L.C. and A.W.L.C. The A.L.C. and A.W.L.C. also noted that several states had developed lacrosse modifications. The Victorian and South Australian bodies provided information of their programmes. Clearly, considerable thought has been given to making rules which encourage team work, the acquisition of skills, the participation of all players, and which discourage the more advanced player from controlling the whole game. Rules to control interference by parents and coaches were also mentioned as a future possibility.

References

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide, 28.
The writers point out that the fear of being hit by a stick or ball is the main worry of both old and new players so the soft ball and flexible stick used in STX ball have psychological advantages in promoting players' confidence.

N.A.G.W.S. Lacrosse guide (1976), Rules of seven-a-side lacrosse. A/F All England Women's Lacrosse Association, Room 235, 70 Brompton Road, London S.W. 3 1EQ, England.
These modified rules relate more closely to field women's lacrosse than STX ball but although they are used in South

Australia they are not in wide spread use in Australia.

Physical Education Post Primary Conference (1979), Monash University, *Lacrosse*.

Discusses STX ball and the rules for soft lacrosse and modified men's lacrosse.

STX Inc. (197-), *STX Ball: the new way to play America's oldest game - lacrosse*, STX Inc., Timonium, Maryland.

ROYAL LIFE SAVING

Royal Life Saving Society of Australia
P.O. Box 170
WOOLLAHRA N.S.W. 2025

The R.L.S.S. has a series of awards based on age and most states hold swimming and rescue competitions with ability based on the awards held. In Victoria competitive Junior events are held with modifications to the distance required to swim and the use of small scale reels on the beach. It is understood that conditions for junior participation and competition in the R.L.S.S. are being extensively altered but no details are available yet.

ROYAL LIFE SAVING

Reference

R.L.S.S.A. (197-), *Manual of Water Safety & Life Saving*, Sydney.

A new edition of this publication, extensively revised, is due to be published in August 1981.

SURF LIFE SAVING

National Junior Association of Surf Life Saving
119 Grayson Avenue
KOTARA N.S.W. 2288

The N.J.A.S.L.S.'s (1979) publication *Instruction competition manual* lists the rules for juniors in four age groups (10 - 13 years). The Surf Life Saving Association of Australia's rules are adhered to except for the following modifications:

(a) smaller surf boards;

(b) shorter distances in the swim and beach events;

(c) smaller surf reels and shorter pace for the March Past events.

Each season juniors undertake a Junior Award project which builds up life saving skills in easy stages. The N.J.A.S.L.S. is very concerned that juniors should find their participation enjoyable as well as instructive.

The Association also advises that it has asked States which have separate organisations for boys and girls to integrate them.

Reference

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide, 43 - 44.

NETBALL

All Australia Netball Association
P.O. Box 2458, G.P.O.
SYDNEY N.S.W. 2001

The A.A.N.A. is investigating the introduction of modified rules at present. The following suggested modifications are contained in a draft submission prepared for the Association by the West Australian Netball Association's Development Officer, Ms. Colleen Ranger (1979).

> Although many children may be able to competently handle the adult netball game, many others drop out of the game through lack of ability and lack of achievement and enjoyment, and others who survive this continue to play but lack certain skills, possibly because their introduction to the game was not geared to their ability.

The development of skills and the increased enjoyment of netball as a game for children are the aims of the modifications. Ms. Ranger believes that if children participate in an activity adjusted to their stage of physical development they will be keen to move on to adult netball, bringing with them carefully developed skills, ensuring the continued popularity and success of the game.

Suggested modifications are:

(a) The use of size 4 (63.5 cm. in diameter) rather than size 5 (68.5-71 cm.) balls.

(b) Goal post height should be 1.8 - 2.4 m. rather than 3 m. Adjustable posts are available or rings can be attached at a lower level on a standard post.

(c) 7 players in the following positions: 2 shooters, 2 defenders and 3 centre players.

(d) Simpler rules -

  i) less strict foot movement allowing 1 or 2 steps during the throwing action.

  ii) No restriction on holding the ball or at least 5 seconds allowed before release.

  iii) 'Contact' should be called 'rough play' to instil in players the need to obtain the ball and defend other players without touching them.

iv) Score cards should be already numbered for each team so that they can be easily marked when a goal is scored.

v) All players should have full use of the court with the following exceptions: centres may not enter either goal circle, shooters may not enter goal circle at the opposing end.

In support of the suggested modification (d) i) it has been said:

> It is open to question whether a game such as Netball, where running must be severely checked, is an appropriate game for children at a stage when it is their habit to run rather than walk. (All England Netball Association 197-).

In 1978 the W.A. Superintendent of Physical Education (L. Pavy, pers. comm., to Primary Principals) recommended that only a standing throw for goal be allowed because of the complexity of the lay-up and jump shot skills and also recommended that the interception by a defender of a shot for goal should not be allowed. The need for the latter rule seems to be widely recognised. In a letter from Ms. E. Evans of the All England Netball Association she noted:

> I would mention from personal experience that in my area it has been found that children playing modified rules at Junior School are at a disadvantage when moving to Secondary School at the age of 11 years. It is harder to change at that age having learnt to play under different rules. The Junior Schools in the area decided to use the normal rules with only the exception that attempted interception of a shot for goal is not allowed. (pers. comm., 1979)

NETBALL

In two other publications (*Modifying sport for children* 1976; *Modifying sports for children* 1979) the following suggestions were made for modifying netball and are worth serious consideration:

(a) The use of larger goal rings.

(b) The use of a standard sized court as 2 modified courts or a court size which is two thirds the length of a standard court.

(c) More flexible and extensive use of substitute players.

(d) The regular rotation of players so that they gain experience in different positions, including interchange of reserves.

(e) 10 min. quarters instead of 15 mins. with a 5 min. break at half time and 3 mins. at the quarter and three quarter times.

(f) An explanation of decisions by the umpire.

(g) A reduced emphasis on competition rosters and trophies.

A major study (Ranger, Allen & Watson 1980) has recently been undertaken in Western Australia to study the skill, personality and motivation of netball players in traditional and modified settings. It concluded:

> While skill, personality and motivation are interrelated, it must be stressed that these factors function within a 'system' of variables which function to structure the learning environment. This study has shown that it is possible to take the social organisation of the learning environment into account and not adversely affect the child' skill learning capabilities.

References

All Australia Netball Association (197-), *Netball for juniors,* compiled by the National Director of Coaching.

All England Netball Association (197-), *Junior netball.* Contains modified rules for primary school players.

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide, 12 - 14.

Modifying sports for children (1979), Report of a seminar, August, Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Western Australian Branch), 16 - 17.

O'Bryan, M., *Netball is fun.* Colban of Canada, 1978. This is one of the *Sport is fun* series, designed as a simple introduction to the rules of various games.

Ranger, C. (1979), Pilot study of modified netball for juniors.

Ranger, C. Allen, R. & Watson, G.G. (1980), Netball: learning to play, a project initiated by the All Australia Netball Association.

W.A. Netball Association (Inc.). *Netball: manual for coaches and administrators of primary school children.* A very good publication on modified netball including a number of 'lead-up' games.

ORIENTEERING

Orienteering Federation of Australia
P.O. Box 16
ABBOTSFORD VIC. 3067

The Orienteering Federation of Australia referred a request for information to Mr. Clive Roper, President of the Orienteering Association of Tasmania, who supplied the following details:

> The basic skill of map reading can commence with 6 year olds with large scale maps (1:2,000) using easy 'terrain'. It can start with the class room and move to the play ground, then the local park before the forest. Map scales can gradually decrease 1:2,000, 1:5,000, 1:10,000 until competition map 1:15,000 and 1:20,000 is used.
>
> The sport itself is organised throughout the world by single association (men and women - all age groups), and competitions are conducted in the following age groups for men and women: up to and including 12 years...
>
> Course lengths vary depending on the age group and sex, and are controlled by estimated winning times, which must take into account the 'speed' of the terrain and the level of competition ...
>
> Excepting major competition, normally within most age groups people are able to choose from a range of courses differing in both navigational difficulty and length. The navigational difficulty is governed by the choice of control locations and also the difficulty of the terrain.
>
> More particularly with young children, much work has been done overseas (more with the learning processes than with the competition), and suggest you write to: Norges Orienteerings Forbund, Hauger Skolevei, NORWAY, 1315. [Unfortunately, no reply was received from this organisation to include in the report]. In Tasmania we have on two occasions tried using Pictorial [aids] for young children. This has been successful, but resources make it impossible to do all the time. (C. Roper, pers. comm., 1979)

ORIENTEERING

While it is not the aim of this report to promote particular sports it would seem that orienteering could occupy a particularly valuable place in school sporting programmes. As it combines physical training, intelligent thinking, and the practical use of maps and compasses, it is an excellent preparation for other outdoor pursuits, increasing fitness and safety skills and giving the individual an opportunity to excel at his own pace. In a school programme it can be linked to geography and science as well as physical and outdoor education and is an excellent example of 'learning by doing'. Not only is the sport organised to include young children, but it is one which is better started when young.

> Experience has shown that Orienteering should be taught at as early an age as possible. Adults, whose imaginative power has been tempered by their own life's experiences, tend to work along a logical line of thought. This makes them less picture-minded than youngsters. Since a strong imagination and an understanding that maps are pictures are necessary to make learning easy, an early start in life on the subject of Orienteering is a definite advantage for both instructor and pupil. (Tasmania Education Dept. 197-, p.1)

ORIENTEERING

References

Swedish Orienteering Federation (197-), *Planning of junior courses*. A/F Orienteering Service, 44 Alexander Parade, Clifton Hill, Vic. 3068.

Tasmania Education Department. Physical Education Branch, (197-), *Orienteering* (Resource material series), Hobart.

Wester, T. (1979), 'A look at orienteering', *Sports Coach* 3 (3).

RACQUETBALL

Australian Racquetball Association
437 St. Kilda Road
MELBOURNE VIC. 3004

The A.R.A. advised that one of the main reasons the Australian Squash Court Owners' Association decided to introduce racquetball was:

> to create an opportunity for young children to play a racquet sport with relative ease. While we have not specifically adapted racquetball for young children, it is true to say the sport by its very nature - e.g. shorter handled racquets, bouncy balls etc. - is perhaps the easiest of all racquet sports for persons of *all* ages and sexes to play.
> (P.J. Allen, pers. comm., 1980)

ROLLER SKATING

Australian Federation of Amateur Roller Skaters
P.O. Box 39
INALA QLD. 4077

The Secretary of the Australian Roller Hockey Committee wrote on behalf of the A.F.A.R.S. advising that junior equipment is available for playing roller hockey and that teams of five players can play the game. 'Our rules do not alter for junior games but until the juniors attain a good degree of skill our referees apply the rules with their age in mind. Our youngest teams are from 10 years up'. (I.L. Roach, pers. comm., 1979)

ROWING

Australian Amateur Rowing Council
G.P.O. Box 1177
SYDNEY N.S.W. 2001

The A.A.R.C. advises that in Australia rowing is not commenced until the age of 14 or 15 years and overseas the youngest age group appears to be 12 years old. It believes that lack of strength precludes children starting any earlier and does not envisage modifying existing rules to enable children in the 6 - 12 age group to compete.

The Australian Women's Rowing Council was contacted but did not reply.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Australian Rugby Football League
G.P.O. Box 4415
SYDNEY N.S.W. 2001

Some years ago the N.S.W. Rugby Football League Coaching Panel recommended a programme for young players which suggested that:

(a) rules should be modified according to player growth and maturation;

(b) intra-club games should be played between teams chosen on basis of skills ability, weight and age, in that order;

(c) highly structured competition should be abolished;

(d) inter-club and intra-club games should be used as a means of assessing player skill and for planning a player development programme;

(e) training should be 'game oriented', the games used being those emphasising all the skills required within the context of the game;

(f) there should be an emphasis on simple skills for very young players and an overall skill development for those under 14 years.

However due to opposition from many parents and some coaches the programme was not implemented.

The A.R.F.L. has not developed a modified form of rugby league. However, it is regarded as a matter of considerable importance by their National Director of Coaching and it is hoped to have rules formulated for trial use in the near future. The aim is to modify rules to allow greater participation and enjoyment particularly from 11 - 13 years. The changes cover field, ball and team sizes, positional play, and rules to emphasise running and ball passing skills. A progressive skills programme is also being devised. Badges and certificates will be used to provide recognition for individual progress.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Reference

Brisbane State Primary Schools' Rugby League (1980?), Modified rules for eight year old competition.

RUGBY UNION

Australian Rugby Football Union
Crane Place, off 31a Pitt Street
SYDNEY N.S.W. 2000

Australian Rugby Football Schools' Union
St. Edmunds College
Canberra Avenue
MANUKA A.C.T. 2603

The A.R.F.U. replied:

> We have long recognised the need for special concern for young ones and some ten years ago introduced internationally a 'Learn to Play' campaign in conjunction with a Mini Rugby for the age groups 7 to 14 years. Various Unions throughout Australia modify the rules and conditions to suit their own local demands. (J.D. Dedrick, pers. comm., 1979)

However, the A.R.F.U. have published a set of rules which includes the following modifications:

(a) Teams to each consist of 9 players.

(b) The pitch to be 59 m. x 38 m. for players under 10 years and 68 m. x 38 m. for players under 13 years.

(c) Under 10s to use a size 3 ball and under 13s a size 4.

(d) Playing time to be 15 min. halves.

(e) During play direct touch - kicking is allowed only from within the 15 m. area and 'fly-kicking' of any description is illegal.

(f) There are no line-outs.

The Australian Rugby Football Schools' Union did not reply to letters seeking information about its views on modified rules but the preamble to its published mini-rugby rules is quite explicit. (A.S.R.U. 1978, p.163) It found that attracting small boys to physical contact sport was becoming increasingly difficult and parents were concerned about the dangers of the sport. Furthermore it became apparent that the 15-a-side game was too complicated in skills and rules for boys and their teachers and that the strong boys dominated the game while the rest were not participating enough. The A.R.S.F.U. believes that mini-rugby is easy to play and supervise. While it retains the main elements of rugby union it concentrates on the skills of running and handling with some physical contact. Involvement is increased by reducing pitch and team size. The scoring rate is usually high so there is an increased feeling of success for the players, promoting learning and enjoyment. The line-out is not used, the scrum is to be treated as merely a means of restarting play and advanced scrummaging need not be taught. It is also noted:

> If too much time is spent playing formal competition there is a tendency for coaches to devote more effort to winning premiership points than developing skill. At that age this situation is immoral. (A.S.R.U. 1978, p.163)

The Sydney Junior Rugby Union also has been experimenting with modified rules since 1973 in an attempt to formalise mini-rugby.

References

Australian Schools Rugby Union (1978), *Handbook,* 2nd. edn., 163 - 165.

Canadian Rugby Union (197-), *Mini-rugby.* Ottawa.

Docherty, D. & Morton, A.R. (1980), 'Mini rugby: a modified game for skill and action', *Sports Coach* 4(3).

Smith, D. (1976), Rugby in the school and in a modified competitive situation, Thesis submitted to the Division of Teacher Education, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education, Hobart.

Williams, R. (1973), *Rugby for beginners,* Souvenir Press, London.

SNOW SKIING

Australian Ski Federation
P.O. Box 21
PADDINGTON N.S.W. 2021

The Federation replied: 'regret unable to assist' (A. Gardner, pers. comm., 1979) and further attempts to establish whether the Federation does not deal with the under 12 age group or does not believe skiing can or should be modified according to age, were unsuccessful.

SOCCER

Australian Soccer Federation
36 - 38 Clarence Street
SYDNEY N.S.W. 2000

Australian Women's Soccer Association
4 Purcell Court
BUNDOORA VIC. 3083

The A.W.S.A. is a small Association and does not cater for the under 12s but hopes to extend its activities to this age group because of the expressed interest of many young girls.

SOCCER

The A.S.F. states: 'We have not made specific alterations to the laws of the game. We hold the view that this should be a regional matter because of the varied conditions found throughout Australia. (E. Worthington, pers. comm., 1978) However, Mr. Worthington, the National Director of Coaching, in an excellent chapter in the recently published coaches manual, (BHP/ASF 1979) warmly advocates the modification of soccer rules to suit the needs of young children. He deserves to be quoted at length.

> We believe that this country's soccer future depends primarily on an improved attitude towards the development of young players ... [We must] make the early experiences more enjoyable ... Modifications to the game, to suit the age, ability and level of understanding of the players is a first priority ... There is no room for the 'hard-grind' adult-type attitudes in learning to play ... The most important factor is that they want to play again ... Competition ... often raises the level of stress to the detriment of skill learning and further fun ... Waiting for turns and infrequent ball contacts may produce boredom with a consequent loss of interest ... There is no room for the formal adult-type physical work-outs or warming up routines ... there should be ample balls to provide for continuous participation. (p.3)
>
> There is a general concensus of opinion bordering on alarm by those at the higher levels of the game that young players, generally below the age of eleven years, are organised into playing the game within a structure identical to that of adult players ... It is said that there is a constant and degrading competition between the football codes for young players. A not unusual response when suggestions are made for the introduction of modifications to the organisation of the game is that of fear that players would transfer their allegiance to another game. It is sad reflection on our society and our sports associations that this should be so. It is difficult to appreciate why, in earlier years, enquiries were not directed to the major soccer nations about the playing of the game by young players. There can be few European migrants here who can recall having a similar soccer

> involvement in their native countries as youngsters, to what their own children are having here.
>
> The whole thing might be seen as a 'Kangaroo problem'. The kangaroo is unique to Australia because of its geographical isolation over thousands of years. Due to this it can exist in natural circumstances only in Australia. We are in danger of producing 'Kangaroo soccer players' - unique to Australia and unable to survive elsewhere. (p.4)

Worthington makes the following comments on modifications:

(a) The mature professional in England aims to move upfield about 64 metres to get near enough for a shot at goal. The unfortunate Australian 7 or 8 year old very often has to move nearer 90 metres to get within his scoring range. (p.5)

It is suggested that by using half the full-size pitch tactical and technical skills can be emphasised rather than physical fitness.

(b) Six-a-side teams are recommended so that ball contact and, therefore, expertise in increased. It means, too, there are fewer players to chase the ball, which is the natural tendency of young players until they understand the tactics of positional play. Furthermore, players can change positions more easily, thus gaining experience as an attacker or defender depending on the play.

(c) The reduction of league competitions for young players is advocated. In under 9 groups the emphasis should be on positive and enjoyable game experiences. In the 9 - 13 year age group the mastery of ball techniques should be the aim. Nine-a-side teams and some competition rosters are permissible for this age group.

Worthington (pers. comm., 1980) believes that since the manual has been published there has 'been a significant acceptance' of the junior policy.

> One cannot legislate for a change of attitudes in this matter. We chose to educate and we have seen a gradual change occurring. Most of our very young players are now playing in small-side games outside of structured competitions.

It has been suggested by another writer (Pless 1977, p.40) that, apart from the advantages already mentioned, small team soccer can be played indoors as well as outdoors and is simple enough for another boy to act as referee. The same writer strongly advocates 5-a-side games. By marking 4 pitches on one standard ground and allowing 30 mins. of play eighty boys can be actively involved in soccer games in one hour compared with 22 in a normal 1 hour game. The unlimited use of substitutes, and the use of a lighter (size 4) ball, are two of a number of suggestions made at a recent seminar (*Modifying sports for children* 1979, p.17) on modified sporting rules. The Canadian Soccer Association (197-) has produced pamphlets on modified soccer and there are also English rules (1978, p.161) which should be consulted by those who wish to devise their own set of modifications.

A successful season with 6-a-side soccer conducted by the Southern Tasmanian Primary Soccer Association (Marlor 1978) in 1978 used the following modifications:

(a) a ground area 50 m. x 35 m. with a rectangular goal penalty area marked 7.5 m. each way from the centre of the goal line and protruding 5 m. into the field of play. The centre circle was 5 m. radius from the centre of the field. The corner area was a 1 m. radius arc. Goals were 1.84 m. high and 5.52 m. wide.

(b) Normal soccer rules prevailed except that the offside rule was not used (though provision was made to introduce it later if the need arose) and goal kicks could be taken from anywhere in the penalty area.

(c) No coaching from the sideline allowed except by the coach and then only in a quiet and helpful manner.

References

BHP/ASF (1979), *Coaches manual,* A/F P.O. Box 385, South Melbourne, Vic. 3205.

Canadian Soccer Association (197-), *Mini soccer rules;* and *Simplified soccer.*

English Schools' Football Association (1978), *75th Anniversary handbook, season 1978 - 79.*

Higginson, D. (1978), 'A junior soccer program', *Journal of Physical Education and Recreation* March, 49.

Kirchner, G. (1978), *Physical education for elementary school children,* 4th. edn., Wm. C. Brown, Dubuque, Iowa.

Kirchner considers that soccer is a game which requires a great deal of skill in kicking, running and dribbling and as it involves total body movement it is an excellent activity for primary school children. He suggests many 'lead-up' games and activities to teach basic soccer skills, rules and playing strategies.

Marlor, V. (1978), *Statement on 6-a-side soccer,* S.T.P.S.A.

SOCCER

Modifying sports for children (1979), Report of a seminar, August, Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Western Australian Branch), Perth.

Pless, W. (1977), 'Changing the aims of soccer', *Panorama* January, 40 - 45.

Pooley, J.C. (1977), 'Developing games skill in beginners', *Sports Coach* 1 (2).

Sweetland, M. (1979), 'A Soccer unit for the primary grades', *Journal of Physical Education and Recreation* September, 67.

SOFTBALL

Australian Softball Federation
Suite 5, 609 St. Kilda Road
MELBOURNE VIC. 3004

The A.S.F. rules provide for the use of a smaller diamond for juniors and consideration has been given to modifying the whole game but it has been rejected as too difficult. The Federation accepts that T-ball is 'virtually a modified version' of the game and recommends it for the Primary school age group 'as it solves the pitching problem which is the biggest one for these children' ... 'the pitcher does not pitch the ball - a batting tee is used thus allowing a lot more action in the field and in the game generally ... T-ball is becoming very popular with the children 10 years and under ... As they become older they drift into Softball and adapt very easily'. (M. Short, pers. comm., 1978 and 1979) The rules are included in the Federation's official softball rule book (latest edition published 1979). (The A.S.F. also mentioned that the Victorian Education Department produced rules for a modified version of softball but a copy of these has not been sighted).

References

Kirchner, G. (1978), *Physical Education for elementary school children,* 4th edn., Wm. C. Brown, Dubuque, Iowa.

Kirchner suggests that softball's popularity is due to its relative simplicity and safety, requiring a minimum amount of protective equipment and a smaller field than baseball. He advocates the rotation of players so that all have a chance to develop skills as catchers and pitchers. He outlines useful lead-up games to encourage proficiency.

Mitchell, G.R. (1979), 'Softball with a new slant', *Church Recreation Magazine* April - June, 32 - 33.

Modifications in junior sport (1978), Report of dinner meeting No. 1, August, Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Victorian Branch).

Contains an account of the attempts by the Waverley Softball Association to modify softball for younger players.

SOFTBALL

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide.

On pp. 16 - 22 rules for T-ball are discussed and some useful 'lead-up' games to develop skills are described.

Morris, G.S.D. (1976), *How to change the games children play*, Burgess Publishing Co., Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Morris advocates 'games analysis' which can result in modification to games to promote specific learning skills. He outlines some useful 'softball type' games on pp. 71 - 81.

New Zealand Dept. of Education. Physical Education Branch (1964?), *Softball rules for primary schools*, Wellington.

This publication was a result of a request by teachers for standardised, simplified softball rules, to replace individual efforts at modifying rules. The P.E. Branch now feels that it should be updated. It is interesting as it is the product of 'trial rules' which were extensively tested in N.Z. schools.

Parkin, D. (1980), 'Children's sport - equalizing the opportunity to play', *Sports Coach* 4(1), 13 - 15.

Tasmanian State Schools Sports Council (1976), *Primary School Softball: revised rules*, Hobart.

These specify a smaller bat and diamond and less technical rules.

SQUASH

Squash Rackets Association of Australia
G.P.O. Box 1550
BRISBANE QLD. 4000

Australian Women's Squash Rackets Assn.
15 Avoca Street
BONDI N.S.W. 2026

New South Wales Junior Squash Rackets Assn.
2 Bass Place
ST. IVES N.S.W. 2075

The S.R.A. and the A.W.S.R.A. both indicated that there were no national modifications to the game for juniors. The State bodies were also contacted, but replies received indicated that both juniors and seniors competed under the rules of the International Squash Rackets Federation.

The N.S.W.J.S.R.A. pointed out that there are junior squash rackets available which are 5 cms. shorter than normal size. Squash balls, too, are made with varying bounce heights. There is also a ball available now which is slightly larger than normal which bounces a little slower and higher and is recommended for all beginners.

> Some court owners also recommend that very young children learn squash by playing racquetball which is basically the same as squash but played with shorter rackets and a ball similar in size to a tennis ball, but has bounce height of about 38% compared to a squash ball's bounce of 18% in height. (T. Hosford, pers. comm., 1980)

SQUASH

Reference

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide, 38 - 39.

SWIMMING

Amateur Swimming Union of Australia
P.O. Box 133
CHATSWOOD N.S.W. 2067

The Union advises that qualifying times are lowered 'for age groups up to 12 years old and varying distances are swum by them'.

(R.D. Quimby, pers. comm., 1980)

An interesting article by Michaels (1979, p.95) attacks the tendency to introduce swimming programmes for children at increasingly younger ages.

> The notion here seems to be that if teaching a skill at a young age is good, then teaching the skill at a still younger age is better. I look for pre-natatl instruction next.

> ... I fear that infants and very young children may become traumatised to the water if the instructor is too 'pushy' and anxious for rapid stroke improvement.

Michaels advocates 'all-round water orientation and aquatic experience for younger children and believes that simple group play is a good way for children to learn water skills such as breath holding, diving under water and the basic movements of sculling, treading water etc. Water games can also encourage adaptation to water and skill development.

On the competitive side Michaels believes that:

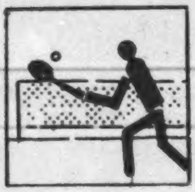
> Fun and practice enjoyment should be the primary goal for coaches of pre-adolescent swimmers. The emphasis on stroke and time improvement should be secondary at this age, and will become a primary goal in later years ... It is best to keep the practice for these younger children relatively short with a period of concise instruction in a language they understand. Use of graphics and demonstrators is a great help in making a point ... [They] love relay swims, particularly of the nonsense variety i.e. corkscrew relays, one-armed swims, feet-first relays and the like. Relays at the end of the practice session are enjoyable for the kids, and also serve training well. You will never see kids swim any harder than in these fool-around swims.

References

Michaels, R.A. (1979), 'Philosophical consideration on instructional and competitive swimming program intensity for younger children', *Swimming Technique* 16(3), 95 - 6.

SWIMMING

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E. Adelaide, 40 - 42.



LAWN TENNIS

Lawn Tennis Association of Australia
55 Commercial Road
SOUTH YARRA VIC. 3141

The L.T.A.A. has no national policy on modified rules and despite interest in the idea in several States only South Australia appears to have attempted modifications. At coaching classes and within some clubs half racquets (with shorter handles), 4 game sets, lower nets, lighter balls and serving from the service line, have been experimented with.

The L.T.A.A. suggested that the recently developed commercial venture 'half court tennis' could be of value to children. The racquet and ball are altered proportionally to the court dimensions so that the skills demanded in standard tennis remain the same. The promoters particularly emphasise that children benefit from using the shorter, lighter racquet.

The L.T.A.A. also mentioned the popularity of 'padder tennis' in America although it does not seem to have been adopted widely in Australia. In New Zealand, where it is popular, the length of the court for padder tennis is the same as the width of a standard tennis court (i.e. 10.97 m.) and the net height is 70 cms. at the centre. Wooden bats are used rather than racquets.

The Boy's and Girl's Schools' Lawn Tennis Association in England have had success with mini lawn tennis using an indoor badminton court and net. The recommended ball is a perforated, plastic airflow type, tennis ball size, preferably in yellow which is the easiest colour for children to see. Standard tennis racquets are used and the basic strokes, tactics and rules of tennis apply. Serving however is underhand and one attempt only is allowed. Scoring can be conventional or that used for table tennis. It has been found that the lighter, slower travelling ball is easier for children to control and that they cope better with the smaller court area. There are the added practical advantages that children can practise indoors in weather which would prohibit lawn tennis and many more children can participate as 4 - 5 badminton courts can be marked on the area taken by one tennis court.

Two further modifications suggested at a recent seminar (*Modifying sports for children*, 1979, p.24) seem worthy of serious consideration:

(a) The use of a line rather than a net for young children which would require less equipment and, more importantly keep the ball in play for longer periods of time.

(b) The ball to be returned on the second or even the third bounce if necessary.

References

Ashby, A. (1979), 'Modified tennis activities for elementary students', *Journal of Physical Education and Recreation* June, 65.

Curtis, W.E. (1971), 'Mini lawn tennis', *Lawn Tennis* January.

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide, 42 - 43.

Modifying sports for children (1979), Report of a seminar, August, Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Western Australian Branch).

TRAMPOLINE

Australian Amateur Trampoline Union
3 Karina Crescent
BEL ROSE N.S.W. 2085

The Union estimates that more than 50% of its competitors are under 12 years of age. There is a sub-junior category for all those under 13.

> The only modifications we make are less demanding alterations to specific rules which apply for State-National and World Championships. The same equipment and rules apply. The 'adult' rules have caused no problem as beginners simply perform skills within their own group and we encourage all to regard competitions as recreational and relaxing. Even at State and National level competitors are expected to assist in the conduct of events, and do so readily.
> (I.W. Irvin, pers. comm., 1980)

VIGORO

N.S.W. Women's Vigoro Association
43 Calder Road
RYDALMERE N.S.W. 2116

The Association does not have competitions for girls under 12 years. 'Girls of this age wishing to play usually join one of the senior teams and get along very well with players of such teams'.
(F. O'Brien, pers. comm., 1980)

In Tasmanian and Western Australian primary schools vigoro is played by girls and boys as a preparatory game to cricket as it requires the same skills as the latter.

VOLLEYBALL

Australian Volleyball Federation
P.O. Box 164
MT. ELIZA VIC. 3930

The A.V.F. has adopted mini-volleyball rules for juniors and recommends the book *Mini-volleyball is fun* (O'Brien 1976) for a description of the game. The rules of mini-volleyball are also published in the

Official rules of volleyball (N.S.W.V.A., 1977). The A.V.F. noted in 1978 that: 'Mini-volleyball is not played to any great extent throughout Australia at present but the game is growing in impetus'. (R.F. Foot, pers. comm., 1978)

References

Baycroft, G. (1974), 'Modifications in competitive volleyball for younger aged players', *Volleyball Technical Journal* 1(3), 84 - 86.

Chandler, J.D. (1980), 'Modified volleyball play', *Journal of Physical Education and Recreation* 51(5), 52 - 53.

Garnier, C. (1974), 'Mini-volleyball', *Volleyball Technical Journal* 1(3), 87 - 91 (article in French language).

Global minivolleyball symposium (1975), Proceedings, Sweden.

International Volleyball Federation. Coaches Commission. Sub-Committee on Mini-Volleyball (1973?), Mini-volleyball rules for children 9 to 12 years of age, endorsed by the A.V.F., 1973.

Modifying sport for children (1976), Compiled by nine 3rd year Physical Education students, Torrens C.A.E., Adelaide, 28 - 32.

N.S.W. Volleyball Association (1977), *Official rules of volleyball.*

O'Bryan, M. (1976), *Mini-volleyball is fun,* Colban of Canada.

Ouwerkerk, C. (1974), 'Let's play powerball', *Volleyball Technical Journal* 1(3), 102 - 103.

VOLLEYBALL

Poitout, L. (1974), 'Volleyball and the child', *Volleyball Technical Journal* 1 (3).

Squibb, G.B. (1975), *Volleyball for juniors: mini-volleyball and other lead-up games suitable for schools and youth groups,* Devonport, Tas.

WATER SKIING

Australian Water Ski Association
P.O. Box 171
ROSANNA VIC. 3085

The A.W.S.A. advises that in their competitive Divisions there are three which provide for younger participants:

(a) Tournament Division - junior boys and girls (under 14 years at 31st December).

(b) Ski racing and Barefoot Divisions - sub-junior boys and girls (under 13 years at 31st December).

The rules for these events are modified only slightly from the Official World Rules. They allow for a lower starting speed particularly in the Slalom and jump events in the Tournament Division.

WATER SKIING

The A.W.S.A. is aware that some clubs conduct competitions under modified rules to encourage participation among all age groups, but these are neither standardised nor officially recognised.

WRESTLING

Australian Amateur Wrestling Union
128 Charles Street
FOOTSCRAY VIC. 3011

The A.A.W.U. does not deal with the 6 - 12 year age group which it believes is not involved in wrestling.

For further reading on the subject, the Canadian Sports Information Resource Centre recommended the book: Hopke, S.C. & Kidder, W. (1977), *Elementary and junior high school wrestling,* A.S. Barnes, South Brunswick.

YACHTING

Australian Yachting Federation
33 Peel Street
MILSON'S POINT N.S.W. 2061

The A.Y.A. advises that in its opinion sailing is a sport which imposes self-regulation or modification, in that there are classes of boats available ranging from small, lightweight dinghies to large keel yachts. The individual can choose to sail the boat which best suits his strength and experience, progressing from a small easily handled craft to a larger boat.

Yacht Clubs generally set a shorter racing course for their junior members, but the courses set require the same knowledge of 'points of sailing', tactics, and the 'rules of the road', therefore it is quite common for children to sail in the same yacht classes as adults.